

READER



The Film Issue

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COMING ATTRACTIONS

IN A WORLD WHERE thousands of films are instantly available for download or streaming wherever there's WiFi, why do we still insist upon going to the movies? Maybe, as a subject of one of the stories in our Film Issue suggests, "[It's] the place for people to get a little break from reality, and that's what movies are—you want to get a little taste of something outside your life."

Once you could find it hanging out in a video store in Ashburn watching selections from one of the greatest collections of kung fu movies that the midwest has ever seen. You can still find it in a university auditorium watching beloved old flickers on 35 mm.

Or maybe the movies are a way to a better world: one where the story on the screen actually reflects the experiences of people you know, where you're viewed as a complete human being instead of defined by the one thing that makes you different, or where everyone is treated with courtesy and respect and entitled to pleasure.

Or maybe movies are a way to connect with strangers, across space, time, or Twitter. (Just ask Whitey, the Music Box Theatre's resident ghost.) After all, even movie characters ride the el. On a more profound level, the great Indian director Satyajit Ray, in his 1970 film *Days and Nights in the Forest*, reviewed this

week, uses a series of apparently simple conversations to reveal fundamental human truths. It's magical, or at least as magical as sitting in the dark watching an image come to life on a screen.

There are other things to bring people together in this issue, even the people who don't like movies: politics (Joravsky on life after TIFs), food (a visit to Flat & Point in Logan Square), theater (reviews of seven new plays), and, of course, music (previews of 11 upcoming shows plus Dumpster Tapes' Demolition fest devoted to Latinx garage bands). All coming soon . . . like as soon as you turn the page. —AIMEE LEVITT

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CITY LIFE



The aftermath of the limo vs. train collision from *Running Scared* (1986). © BOB JANZ

TRANSPORTATION

The CTA on celluloid

The city's iconic elevated tracks, subways, and buses star in Hollywood flicks.

By JOHN GREENFIELD

In any movie set in our city, from the 1973 Paul Newman and Robert Redford caper *The Sting* to last year's Steve McQueen-directed heist film *Widows*, the elevated tracks, subways, and buses of the Chicago Transit Authority are likely to play a starring role.

"The el system is just so beautiful and picturesque," local tour guide and history lecturer Michael Corcoran told me last week. "The Loop elevated is especially cool—it's like this little monorail through the city. It's this iconic piece of infrastructure that just says 'Chicago.'"

Along with film historian Arnie Bernstein, Corcoran coauthored the latest edition of *Hollywood on Lake Michigan: 100+ Years of Chicago and the Movies* (Chicago Review Press 2013), an account of our city's illustrious cinematic past and present.

Corcoran walked me through some of his favorite flicks that showcase the CTA. He got the inside scoop on several of the movies from Bob Janz, a retired transit worker who spent

17 years, from the late 70s to the early 90s, orchestrating the use of CTA rolling stock and facilities for numerous film and TV productions.

The Hunter (1980)

Corcoran says this thriller, the last actor Steve McQueen made before dying of cancer a few months after its release, isn't one of his best. But it's well known in Chicago for a scene where the dangerous criminal that McQueen, a bounty hunter, is pursuing drives through a guardrail of the Marina City parking garage and plunges into the Chicago River.

But that's only the grand finale to a dramatic chase that starts with McQueen running after the fugitive through the streets of Uptown and onto a Red Line train at the Wilson station. McQueen, doing his own stunt, winds up on the roof of a railcar with the bad guy shooting at him as the train heads downtown and into the subway. Janz spent six weeks working with the film crew on the scene, which involved placing a camera truck on a flatbed car and running it alongside the train.

CITY LIFE

***The Blues Brothers* (1980)**

When Jake Blues (John Belushi) arrives at his brother's room in the old Stag Hotel SRO on Van Buren Street, right next to the Loop elevated tracks, he asks, "How often does the train go by?" "So often that you won't notice it," Elwood (Dan Aykroyd) replies, and then, absurdly, trains rumble by every few seconds. Corcoran said the film crew rented two el railcars and just ran the same cars back and forth in front of the window like a toy train set. If you look closely next time, you'll notice that there are no passengers in the cars.

***Risky Business* (1983)**

This coming-of-age comedy features what may be the hottest love scene ever filmed on public transportation, between Rebecca De Mornay and then-off-screen-boyfriend Tom Cruise. I asked Corcoran whether this racy sequence raised any concerns from CTA brass about inspiring copycat Metro-sexuals. "The upper-echelon folks didn't really care," he said. "The biggest thing the CTA is concerned with is that people don't get the impression that they're allowing Hollywood to do anything unsafe."

However, Janz told Corcoran the scene was "a huge pain in the butt" because it used a large portion of the CTA's elevated and subway system. This included a shot where the lovers' train passes through a tunnel at a climactic moment.

***Code of Silence* (1985)**

Corcoran noted that this Chuck Norris action vehicle has a theme of bad Chicago cops protecting each other, which could easily be ripped from today's headlines. As in *The Hunter*, there's a scene where the hero ends up on the roof of a moving el train, this time on the Brown Line.

"Chuck's starting to lay an ass-whoopin' on the bad guy when the guy tries to escape by jumping into the river as the train crosses the Wells Street bridge, and Chuck dives in after him," Corcoran said. Janz did such a good job of smoothly driving the train during the filming of this tricky fight scene that afterwards one of the stuntmen hugged him and cried, "You've got golden fingers."

***Running Scared* (1986)**

This cop buddy film featured the most complicated CTA scene that Janz worked on. Detectives Gregory Hines and Billy Crystal are in a taxi chasing drug dealer Jimmy Smits in his limousine when the limo driver veers onto

the Yellow Line tracks in Skokie and the cab follows. Incongruously, the chase suddenly switches to the Loop elevated tracks, ending with the limo smashing into an oncoming train and flipping over.

The film crew had purchased the two railcars at the front of the train and gutted them, and Janz operated the train from the third car, relying on a cue from the director since he couldn't see in front of him. The limo and cab, which had been lifted onto the elevated tracks with a crane, were actually driven right on the tracks with no special gear under the chassis.

***The Fugitive* (1993)**

This thriller from *Code of Silence* director and Chicago native Andrew Davis has two key CTA-related scenes. In one scene, FBI agents are trying to determine the location of Dr. Richard Kimble (Harrison Ford), based on the elevated train sound in the background of his pay phone call to his lawyer. The announcement "Next stop, Merchandise Mart" reveals to the feds that Kimble is in Chicago, but that doesn't actually make sense, because CTA stop announcements are only audible within the railcars.

In another scene, Ford's Kimble subdues the murderous one-armed man inside a Red Line car and handcuffs him to a pole. We hear an announcement that the next stop is the (fictional) Balbo station. The voiceover was done by *Working* author Studs Terkel. Corcoran noted, "That was a little Chicago in-joke by Davis."

***Stranger Than Fiction* (2006)**

Corcoran called this surreal, star-studded comedy-drama, featuring Will Ferrell, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Dustin Hoffman, Queen Latifah, and Emma Thompson, "probably the best movie ever shot in Chicago." At one point there's a scene where Ferrell's Harold Crick is sitting within the moving accordion section of an articulated CTA bus and Gyllenhaal, his love interest who's pissed off at him, is sitting nearby in a nonmoving seat. The bus keeps turning so that, awkwardly, he's repeatedly positioned in her face. Near the end of the flick, Crick gets run over while pushing a child out of the path of a CTA bus. Director Marc Forster put out a casting call for a real-life bus operator to pilot the vehicle and hired driver Denise Hughes. She's done multiple acting roles since then, but as of a few years ago she was still regularly driving the Chicago Avenue route, so keep an eye out for her behind the wheel of the #66. 

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POLITICS

Let's make a deal

Why corporate Chicago should drop the fight against Pritzker's Fair Tax

By BEN JORAVSKY

First the good news, captured in a headline on a recent article in *Crain's*—Chicago's not stupid anymore.

Well, that's more or less the point of the headline.

The actual headline reads: "Developer pitches TIF-free plan for South Loop megaproject."

The subhead tells the rest of the story: "Since city tax-increment financing has become politically radioactive..."

Okay, let's break it down. Robert Dunn, a big-time developer from Madison, Wisconsin, has a vision.

His company—Landmark Development—wants to build One Central, a massive high-rise community of apartments, condos, office space, and hotel rooms above the train tracks just west of Soldier Field.

The total project will cost at least \$20 billion and consume 34 acres. It's got members of the *Tribune* editorial board—who never saw a taxpayer handout to developers they didn't love—so excited they're hyperventilating.

As a big believer in innovation, prosperity, and growth—what, you didn't know I was a

big believer in these things?—I say, right on, Robert Dunn!

But here's the rub. Dunn needs a platform over those train tracks upon which to build his skyscrapers.

Clearly, he doesn't want to build that platform with his own money because—what the hell, man, just because he comes from Wisconsin doesn't mean he's dumb enough to fully pay for his own projects.

Instead, he's come up with a creative way to get the suckers—I mean, taxpayers—to pay for it.

Don't think of it as a platform upon which he will build his skyscrapers. No, think of it as a Transit Center that will connect Amtrak, Metra, and the CTA.

What's that you say? Didn't know you needed a Transit Center? Well, now you do. So shut up and pay for it!

The estimated cost of the Transit Center is \$3.8 billion—credit cards accepted.

In any event, from here on out the talking point will be Transit Center for south loop, not platform for Wisconsin developer.

Pretty clever—for a cheesehead.

Think of this as a post-Lincoln Yards development deal. In the old days—before Lincoln Yards, that is—developers seeking a handout would line up the mayor. (Daley, Emanuel, really what's the difference?)

The mayor would then twist aldermanic arms and, presto, the developer got his TIF handout and taxpayers got higher property taxes.

But that was then.

In the post-Lincoln Yards era, TIFs have—to quote *Crain's*—become politically radioactive.

Apparently, Chicagoans aren't quite as gullible as they used to be about TIFs. Those three letters (T-I-F) might as well be B-A-D—at least among ordinary Chicagoans. They might not know exactly what TIF stands for, or how it works, but they know it's a scam. Which makes them more enlightened than, say, the folks who write those we-love-handouts editorials in the *Trib*.

At this point, I'd like to say thanks to the mavericks, malcontents, and gadflies who opposed the Lincoln Yards deal.

They couldn't stop a majority of aldermen from voting to approve that boondoggle.

But they raised such a ruckus that Mayor-elect Lori Lightfoot felt compelled to declare that the days of free-and-easy approval for TIF handouts are over. We shall see if Lightfoot stays true to her word.

But apparently Dunn got the message and so he's turning to the state to help pay the \$3.8 billion for his platform—I mean, Transit Center.

If this were a traditional TIF deal, I'd prob-

ably be against it on the grounds that we have so many other pressing obligations—pensions, schools, police, etc.

Plus, my property tax bill just keeps going up, up, up.

But because Dunn is looking for state money, it lightens the load. Yes, I still pay state taxes. But, well—consider this.

So often when I write columns criticizing TIF-funded boondoggles, I'll get comments from people who live outside of Chicago, asking me "Why you gotta be such a Debbie Downer, man? Don't you want growth and development?"

Isn't that funny how much someone in, say, Highland Park, loves development in Chicago, so long as he doesn't have to pay for it?

But with Dunn turning to the state (and the feds, for that matter) to fund his platform, folks in Highland Park get to kick in a little, too. Join the party, Highland Parkers.

And that brings me to Governor Pritzker's Fair Tax initiative.

At the moment, Illinois has a flat income tax—no matter how much you make, you pay the same 4.5 percent.

To his credit, Pritzker has signed on to a progressive tax—the wealthier you are, the higher your rate.

The business community's waging holy war against this progressive tax. They've put together Ideas Illinois, a dark-money outfit that's financing a campaign intended to turn the middle class against the Fair Tax.

I can't say for certain who's funding Ideas Illinois and all their TV commercials—as I said, it's a dark-money group, meaning they don't have to list their donors.

But I'll bet you some of their backers are the same people jumping for joy over One Central.

Just because they don't like paying taxes doesn't mean they don't like to feed from the trough.

The front man for Ideas Illinois is Greg Baise, a Republican political strategist who got his start in the 70s as an aide to then-Governor James Thompson.

Thompson was one of those old-school Republicans who loved cutting deals with Democrats.

So, c'mon, Greg Baise, let's cut a deal. You drop your opposition to Pritzker's Fair Tax. And I'll sign on to Dunn's platform, I mean, Transit Center.

Sounds like a win-win proposition to me. 

 @joravben



From left: Wagyu brisket, smoked lamb terrine, cannelloni, porchetta, confit potatoes  SANDY NOTO

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RESTAURANT REVIEW

Flat & Point isn't your Pawpaw's barbecue

A Spiaggia vet is smoking something good in Logan Square.

By **MIKE SULA**

The barbecue gods are cruel. On the day Brian Bruns's 2,800-pound, 500-gallon, custom-built smoker arrived, he couldn't locate the owners of the cars blocking its path into his new restaurant. "It's four guys and they had this massive forklift," he says. "They lifted it over a VW. It was just hanging over the car wobbling and I was about to have a panic attack."

The smoker, a 15-foot beast made from repurposed propane tanks, made it safely to the sidewalk, but just on the edge of the coming polar vortex, Bruns's contractor still had to knock out a 8-foot-by-15-foot hole in the brick wall because it wouldn't fit through the front door.

The chef had the assurances of his lawyer, architect, and contractor that once it was finally installed in the back of the dining room, alongside a live-fire Argentine grill, there wouldn't be any problems. But two days before opening in late March, the final city inspector took a look at the rig and all its potential firepower and said no way.

No one knows better the Sisyphean chal-

lenges of making good barbecue than Bruns. Twice a week for two summers, the Tru and Spiaggia vet and his wife Taylor trudged across the North Avenue Bridge to the beach, pushing wheelbarrows and dragging wagons full of produce from Green City Market to a small kiosk owned by the Park District, equidistant between Fullerton and North Avenues. They also brought their own oak wood and meat and a combination smoker-grill setup that they chained to the wall. The limitations of space and access encouraged creativity. Instead of adopting one of the more traditional barbecue models, Bruns took the opportunity to experiment with things like kimchi-cured pork belly banh mi, Italian beef brisket sandwiches, and pulled chicken with market corn and beans. "We were always struggling to have a good mix of different items and push people's boundaries as to what they thought barbecue was."

He got two distinct reactions. Some were annoyed that they couldn't buy a pound and a half of brisket on a cafeteria tray. Others embraced reasonably priced smoked meats and vegetables on tacos, sliders, and housemade

sausages in a spot where there are no other options. (Yes, Bruns stored a sausage grinder in a deep freezer on-site.)

The latter group proved encouraging enough that the chef began looking for a proper restaurant space so he could flex the muscles he'd developed over the years on an increasingly larger series of smokers on his third-floor patio, on days and over nights when he wasn't working at Spiaggia.

The couple looked at over 200 spaces around town, most of which couldn't accommodate the firepower he was dreaming about: a custom-built FatStack smoker, built in the style of the reverse-flow smoker used at Austin's perpetually mobbed Franklin Barbecue. Bruns was about to give up and take a restaurant job in California when they found their spot on Fullerton—a Dominican restaurant that never got off the ground. It still needed a bit of work, but at least it was affordable. He and his father built all the booths and tables and decorated it with their own stuff, including Bruns's cookbooks and an oddly illustrated Charlie Trotter poster he was awarded after a summer peeling asparagus and pitting cherries in the great chef's kitchen when he was 11.

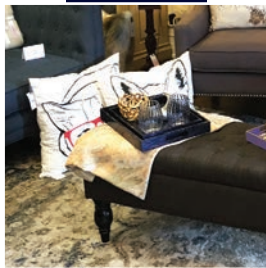
After adding some extra fire-suppression systems and committing to a monthly hood cleaning program, Flat & Point received an all-clear by the fire department and opened seven months after the harrowing smoker delivery. Flat & Point's initial counter service ordering model was in line with standard barbecue joint protocol (there's table service now). But what Bruns is doing with the gently billowing oak smoke his rig produces is not. You still can't order six pounds of brisket on butcher paper, but you can have a thick slab of Snake



Brian Bruns; Wagyu brisket  SANDY NOTO

River Farm Wagyu brisket, usually a bit of the relatively meatier flat and a bit of the more marbled point, the entire piece laced with buttery intramuscular fat rendered clear and jiggly and suffused with gentle smoke flavor. Bruns knows that this sublime piece of beef requires no barbecue sauce, and he doesn't serve it with one. But you will get a side of potatoes and a vegetable. When I ate it, it was an artful potato gratin, topped with spinach creamed with smoked garlic and onion puree.

Apart from the beef, Bruns brings in whole pastured animals—pigs, chickens, and ➔



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FOOD & DRINK

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continued from 7

sometimes lamb, many from downstate's Slagel Family Farm—and he's shopping according to the season. For now he's sticking with an unconventional porchetta: whole pork bellies split and rolled around housemade sausage, sliced in a thick slab and served, in my case, on a bed of creamy polenta, dressed with spring pea shoots, purple sauerkraut, and gently sweet apple butter.

Bruns is doing an intensely beefy brisket burger ground from trim and dry-aged sirloin, and pulled chicken with ramp chimichurri and smoked black bean puree too, but the menu will change a lot (the latter will involve sweet corn come August). When I first ate there just after Easter, Bruns was taking advantage of the extra lamb he'd smoked for brunch to run a terrine special, wrapped in ramp leaves and served with pickled mustard seed. Drawing on his pasta skills, he'd rolled out fresh cannelloni and rolled it around pulled pork whipped with smoked garlic, pecorino, parmesan, and fermented ramps, topped with a smoked mushroom duxelle folded with pork jus and smoked carrot puree.

These remain on the menu, but Bruns will probably move on to something else before long. I'm guessing his potatoes will stay on forever. He gently confits Kennebec wedges in rendered brisket fat, until they look like pieces of dark chocolate, with a fragile crispness armoring a creamy interior. I'd dumbly push these into my face on their own merits, but they're served with a truffled parmesan cream that's just as worthy of their greatness.

Yes, the barbecue gods are cruel, but no one's nastier than petty Yelpers. Bruns continues to catch grief from people expecting cheap, traditional barbecue. To be fair, so much dreck has been passed off among the glut of new barbecue restaurants that have opened in recent years that people have cause to be suspicious.

But Flat & Point's pricing is quite reasonable relative to the high-performance, quality-sourced, and confidently creative food he's putting out. Here's a tip: Don't come expecting barbecue as you know it. Think of it as a gift from the gods. 

 @MikeSula

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By QUINN MYERS

It's one of the funniest scenes in *Singin' in the Rain*. Gene Kelly and Jean Hagen are a pair of 1920s movie stars at an advance screening of their first sound picture—their first “talkie”—when there's a problem: the sound is messed up. Onscreen, Kelly's clothes squeak like rubber boots, Hagen's pearls clink, and her shrill voice comes in, then fades out, then comes in again. In their seats, Kelly and Hagen shift anxiously as the audience laughs and cheers and heckles like it's watching a slapstick comedy instead of a drab costume drama. The sound falls out of sync, it slows down and distorts, and then it cuts out completely. But this time, it's for real.

The audience—the actual audience here in the Max Palevsky Cinema at the University of Chicago—laughs and cheers too. The musical is officially put on hold, but the mood remains festive, even though it's a Thursday night in January. Chatter echoes as people look around at each other, and then up to the back of the theater, trying to see into the windows of the projection booth.

That's where Martin Awano, the evening's projectionist, is sitting.

“The theater that had [the film] before us had wound two of the reels top to top, so for two reels the soundcheck was on the wrong side,” Awano explains a few months later. “I should have caught that but I didn't. But it's moments like that where you have a relationship with the object, where you're thinking, ‘I didn't take care of this correctly,’ and you feel a little guilty.”

The sound would cut out or stutter a few more times that night before the issue was resolved. But, in hindsight at least, Awano wasn't too concerned.

“There's a certain elegance to the mistakes that happen,” he says.

Awano, along with fellow U of C senior Nora Gonzalez, is one of the outgoing general chairs of Doc Films, the university's student-run film society. It's the oldest of its kind in the country, tracing its roots back to 1932, when

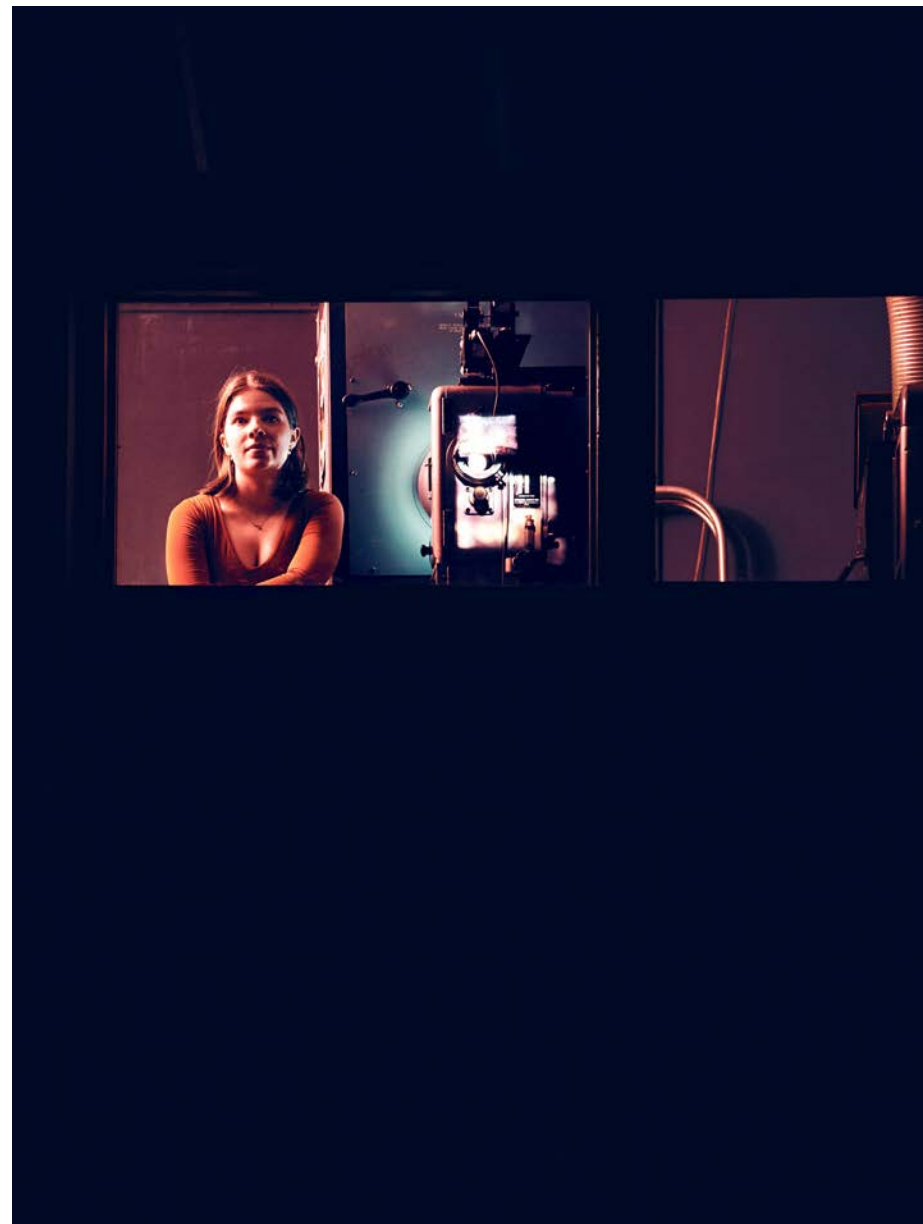
it originally showed only documentaries (hence its name). Open to the public, the club shows movies—sometimes as many as three a day—every day of the academic school year and, whenever possible, on film. Doc attracts cinephiles and casual moviegoers from all over Chicago and has consistently eclectic offerings: recent series have included “Dinner Parties of the Idle Rich” featuring films like *L'Avventura* and *Daisies*, and “Phantom Rides: Trains and Cinema,” which showed *Doctor Zhivago* and *Murder on the Orient Express*.

One of Doc Films' defining features is its approximately 125-person volunteer staff, made up mostly of students but also a fair number of community members, who sell tickets, program the calendar, and project the films themselves.

Many volunteers fill numerous roles; like Awano, Gonzalez also works as a projectionist. During a joint interview in March, Gonzalez says this enthusiastic, anyone-can-get-involved approach sets Doc apart from other Chicago movie venues.

“There are certain limits that come across from being all-volunteer,” she says. “But you get people who are just passionate, and just really want to do this, and just really want to see celluloid film, right here on campus.”

On its best nights, when the theater is full but not packed, when the projector is running smoothly, and the sophomore in front of you isn't constantly checking his phone, that passion can transform the moviegoing experience from a night's entertainment into a ritual of discovery and community-building. The magic is perhaps most present during the first week of every quarter when longtime Doc attendees and new converts alike pore over the always artfully designed Doc calendar, cooing in delight or manic excitement when they see an old favorite or a classic they've been trying to catch forever. That unadulterated love of movies translates into an overflow of creative enthusiasm that's reflected in Doc's unique programming structure: the club encourages



Nora Gonzalez in the projection booth  MAX THOMSEN

anyone to attend regular programming meetings and propose a film series they'd like to see. Gonzalez says while attendance varies widely, the core programming committee is

DOC FILMS FEST
5/25-5/26: 10 AM, Max
Palevsky Cinema, 1212 E. 59th,
773-702-8574, docfilms.uchicago.edu, \$9-\$24 one-day
pass, \$14-\$39 two-day pass.

made up of about 30 people—half students, half not. At the end of every quarter, the proposed ideas are voted on, and the most popular make it onto an upcoming calendar.

But while film selection is in theory open to all people and points of view, that hasn't always meant the movies chosen reflect who's coming to see them.

Ursula Wagner, 38, is a Doc projectionist and programmer who's been coming to screenings for the last decade. Wagner says she was drawn to Doc for the same reasons as everyone else: she loved movies and Doc was one of the only theaters near her home in Woodlawn. But after a while, Wagner says she started to “get frustrated with some of the lack of diversity in programming. I would look at these films and be like, these are really great films, but they look like they were all chosen by maybe, high school boys who had taken a film class.” ➔

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Predictably, Wagner says, that meant an abundance of films made by men.

“I just thought it would be great if there were some different kinds of films shown. And one of my friends said, ‘You know, you can go to the programming meetings, that’s something that supposedly anybody can do.’ So, I started going to those meetings wanting to program different kinds of programming.”

But it wasn’t exactly an easy process. After proposing a series featuring contemporary female American directors in 2013, Wagner says she got resistance from some male board members, who said things along the lines of “we should show movies because they’re good, not because they happen to be directed by a woman.” The response became a recurring theme for several ideas Wagner proposed, which resulted in some tough, emotionally-charged conversations about representation and diversity across the program. Wagner says for a little while, she had to take a step back from programming.

After several years of advocating for more inclusivity, Wagner says there are still some people who “push back against the notion of changing their programming choices to bring different kinds of movies into Doc.” Overall, though, things have improved. She put together a Tilda Swinton showcase in 2016, and last quarter programmed a new lesbian cinema series. She says that, at its best, programming can be a satisfying and sometimes thrilling outlet, especially as Doc’s calendar becomes more diverse.

“People are a little bit more aware, [that] we should show different kinds of voices, and different kinds of movies,” she says, “and not just have a Scorsese retrospective alternating with a Bertolucci retrospective every other year. We can be a little bit more creative than that.”

For Wagner, that creativity has manifested in subtle and unsubtle ways. In the winter of 2018, she programmed a series called, “A Dish Best Served Hot: Feminist Revenge Fantasies.”

For a student-run organization, Doc is a complex logistical operation. Board members oversee not just programming and publicity, but also the acquisition of screening rights and the actual movies, many of which are heavy and delicate 35-millimeter film prints.

Doc regularly imports celluloid films from distributors all over the world, and between screening rights and shipping, the costs add up. Gonzalez says the organizers try to keep each series—which typically include around nine or ten films—close to \$4,000 total.

“If it’s below that we’re in good shape, if it’s above that we can’t have too many,” she says.

Doc has a total budget of \$125,000 for the 2018-2019 school year. Part of that is fronted by the university; the rest comes from ticket sales. Individual series are also occasionally sponsored through partnerships with academic departments or local cultural organizations. Last fall, Doc raised its longtime admission prices from \$5 to \$7 a screening, and from \$30 to \$40 for a quarterly pass. Gonzalez says the fee hike was necessary to ensure esoteric and

diverse programming can still find its way to Doc, and the prices remain cheaper than most of the city’s art house or indie theaters.

“We don’t make a lot of money,” she says. “[But] we don’t have to worry about making a profit like other theaters in Chicago do, so I think it gives us a little more flexibility.”

“I don’t think we exist to prove that this is the more economical thing to do,” Awano adds. “it’s just something that is going to be lost to history unless we do it. . . . Doc Films is this institution where all the effort really goes to not try to advance into the new era of showing movies . . . just to preserve film and show film.”

That emphasis on preservation is felt most palpably in the Doc projection booth, a crowded space that feels like a cross between an attic and a college radio station. It’s here where Doc projectionists prep and test each film print and switch reels between the dual projectors during screenings.

As with its programming arm, Doc encourages anyone to learn this archaic, quickly-disappearing skill. Students and community members apprentice for several quarters to learn how to handle the film correctly and have to take a test before they can project on their own. Of course, there are occasional blips and errors, like the snafu during *Singin’ in the Rain*, that might be avoided at a professional theater. But Gonzalez says those mistakes are an essential part of the Doc Films charm.

“Even when the framing’s messed up or you see somebody repositioning, it’s like ‘Oh, I know that [a] projectionist is up there right

now, they’re fixing it, they probably messed up,’” Gonzalez says. “I don’t think anybody goes in, knowing Doc Films, thinking this is going to be an absolutely perfect, seamless experience.”

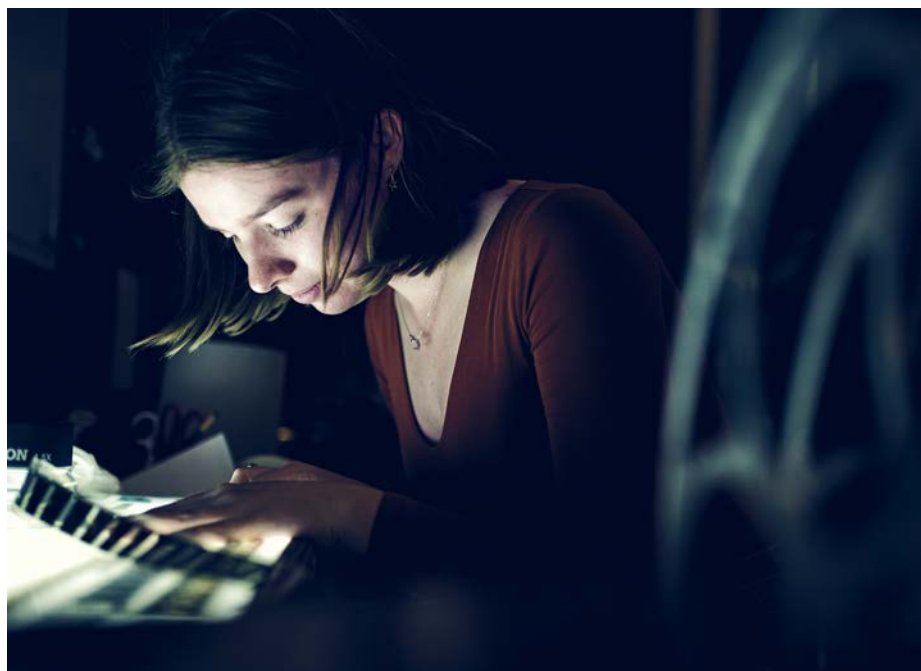
At Doc, the trade-off you get for sacrificing a flawless viewing experience is a reminder that the moviegoing experience can be something more than the result of a panoptic algorithm tracking your every scroll and click. At Doc and elsewhere, the analog click and flicker of an old film print feels comfortable, a reassurance that there are humans working up in that booth.

For Chicago filmmaker Gordon Quinn, that experience—the human experience—is an essential part of watching films in the first place.

“It’s very very different to see a film with a group of people, to experience them experiencing the film,” he says. “When they sigh, when they laugh, all of that is a very different kind of experience. So I really believe in public space and people coming together in those spaces to experience something, to experience a work of art.”

Quinn is the cofounder and artistic director of Kartemquin Films, a local production house that has had a hand in some of the best documentaries to come out of the midwest over the past few decades, notably 1994’s *Hoop Dreams* and last year’s *Minding the Gap*, both of which were nominated for Academy Awards.

But before all that, he was just another movie-loving undergrad at the University of Chicago in the early 60s when he discovered Doc Films. Quinn says it was one particular



Soulet Ali turns down the theater lights; Nora Gonzalez inspects film for scratches © MAX THOMSEN



Exterior of Ida Noyes Hall, home of Doc Films  MAX THOMSEN

documentary he saw at Doc—*Happy Mother’s Day*, a 1963 short about the birth of the Fischer quintuplets in South Dakota—that sparked the beginning of his filmmaking career.

“When I saw that it was like, ‘Ah, that’s what I want to do.’ I mean it was just like seeing that film was one of those life-changing experiences.”

Since he graduated, Quinn’s had an ongoing relationship with Doc. In 2011, the club held a Kartemquin retrospective, and in February of this year, Quinn screened his 1968 film *Inquiring Nuns* and stayed for a post-show Q and A. He’ll also be in attendance at the first-ever Doc Films Festival, a two-day event over Memorial Day weekend that’s showcasing documentaries by Chicago-area filmmakers.

Spaces like Doc, Quinn says, are more than just movie theaters: they’re vital democratic institutions.

“It’s one of the powerful ways in which ideas and politics and things are discussed. Everyone has shared an experience. They may have not seen it all the same way, but they’ve all sat there and seen it together, and that’s really important, in terms of how we create more of a sense of community, across various kinds of divisions.”

It’s a balance that Doc strikes tenderly. It’s both a community institution, centered on education and discovery, and a space for friends to just watch films together.

“The point of Doc has never been to just make as much money as we can so that we’re sustainable,” Awano says. “It’s just to have this experience with other students and community members, [to] hang out and watch movies. It’s a luxury to be able to do that.” 

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Tapeheads

In the 80s and 90s, 79th Street Video had the best video collection on the south side. What happened after it shut down?

By LEOR GALIL

Scarecrow Video is one of the largest video stores in the world, with more than 132,000 titles. It began in the confines of a small Seattle storefront back in December 1988 and only survived to see its pearl anniversary because the community around it understood the cultural value of its collection. In 2014, Scarecrow's second-generation owners considered selling off the store's videos following years of financial struggles—simply put, fewer people were renting from them year after year. Instead, that October, the owners donated every last VHS, DVD, and laser disc to the employees, who raised \$100,000 to help turn the rental spot into a nonprofit.

Streaming contributed to Scarecrow's decline, but also helped bolster its reputation as a cultural landmark. As video stores have teetered towards obsolescence, the few that have stuck around have become totems of cinephilia, the holdouts for fanatics who aren't satisfied by the comparatively few options available on Netflix, Hulu, Amazon, and even Criterion's new streaming service. In the past year, Scarecrow has been the subject of features published by SeattlePI.com, City Lab, and the *New York Times*; its thirtieth anniversary helped generate press, but so did its successful GoFundMe drive in April 2018, which raised another \$100,000.

Even with a nationwide shortage of video-rental establishments, Chicago has helped

keep two of the most remarkable hubs in the country alive. Facets, a nonprofit established in 1975, rents out and streams more than 50,000 titles and has established a national presence for its work with foreign fare; it also operates as a distributor and runs a small cinematheque out of its Lincoln Park headquarters. A short ways west and slightly south of Facets, in Bucktown, sits Odd Obsession Movies, which has rented out fringe, cult, and obscure flicks since its launch in 2004. In 2015 *Tribune* critic Michael Phillips reported on Odd Obsession's change in location—it moved five doors north of its original storefront on Milwaukee Avenue and raised a little more than \$13,000 on Indiegogo to sustain the shop and help expand its selection of 25,000 films.

Both Facets and Odd Obsession have earned their reputations in part by offering a catalog of hard-to-find films and in part by engendering a community of film lovers. Until five years ago, Chicago had another video rental spot with a large library of movies, though this one catered to a Black clientele on the south side: 79th Street Video. The Ashburn shop opened in 1983 and at one point held 45,000 movies (both VHS and DVD). It earned a reputation for its selection of kung fu films that were nearly impossible to find stateside until this century. During its peak in the late 1980s, it once rented out 5,000 movies on a single day. It served at least one Chicago Bears player and



SLOANE LEONG

one untrained horror director who became a cult legend.

Besides a 2013 *South Side Weekly* story by onetime *Reader* contributor Isabel Ochoa Gold, 79th Street Video didn't leave much of a digital fingerprint. Gold profiled the shop as its owner, Russell G. Pine Jr., prepared to close it down in March 2014 due to his failing health. I've often wondered about what happened when the shop finally closed down. What happened to the tens of thousands of videos? Who felt the loss of an independent rental institution that lasted three decades? What is its legacy?

I never got to ask Russ about the shop; he died in January 2015 at age 65. But I did sit down with his younger brother, Chuck, who provided the financial support Russ needed to open the store. They co-owned and ran 79th

Street Video during its first decade, when the Pine brothers knew they had much—if not all—of the south side's video-rental business. "There wasn't much competition," Chuck says. "We really owned the whole thing—we owned the whole east side."

Chuck, Russ, and their three siblings grew up in a household that understood how business worked. "My dad opened up the second laundromat in the city of Chicago," Chuck says. "At one point, we had 16 laundromats in the family." The boss of Coin Laundry, Russell H. Pine, wanted Chuck to run the chain. "I hated the business, truthfully," Chuck says. "You're basically a mechanic—all he did was fix stuff all the time, and I hate that. Give me a screwdriver and a wrench and I'm crabby in about three minutes."

Chuck preferred to wheel and deal. “My dad was a big stocks guy, so I was trading stocks by fifth grade,” Chuck says. During his freshman year of high school in the late 1970s, he bought 1,000 shares of Page America. “Bought it for 30 cents and sold it for \$9—so I had nine grand after I sold it,” he says. By the time he graduated high school in 1981 he had made enough money through trading that he could open his own business. “I wanted to be self-employed, for sure,” Chuck says. The problem was, he didn’t have any ideas for a business. His brother Russ, 12 years Chuck’s senior, had an idea.

A couple years before they opened 79th Street Video, the brothers opened a rental spot named after its south suburban base: Midlothian Video. “We started with 650 movies,” Chuck says. “Within a year and a half we were killing it. We were making a ton of money, and always putting all the money back in the store and buying more tapes, more tapes, and more tapes.” Since not every household had adopted VHS technology, Midlothian Video sold VCRs, too, a tactic that won over at least one senior citizen who wandered into the shop dumbfounded. “He spots that we have an adult room—goes in that adult room, comes out, and literally buys a VCR,” Chuck says. “Next thing you know, him and his wife, who were both in their 70s, were all about the adult [fare].”

The Midlothian location amassed about 4,000 VHS tapes by the time the Pine brothers decided to open another video store, this one at 79th and Western in Chicago. Chuck and Russ borrowed about \$10,000 from their father and half the stock from Midlothian Video to open 79th Street Video. The Pine brothers oversaw both rental spots until Russ got divorced in 1989 and his ex took ownership of Midlothian Video. “I lost a half a video store in my brother’s divorce,” Chuck says. “I lost more than my brother, to be honest with you. But we just wanted to be done with that drama, and the money was coming in so quick at 79th Street.”

Chuck can’t remember why he and Russ settled on the spot in Ashburn. “We probably were targeting that city crowd,” he says. “We were right on the border of the Black and white neighborhood, I don’t know if that had anything to do with it or not, but it could have—it’s possible that that was why we picked that exact spot.” When 79th Street Video opened, Ashburn was majority Irish Catholic. According to the *New York Times*, the first Black families began moving to the neighborhood in the 1980s, but they were far in the minority—by 1991, Blacks made up just two percent of the neighborhood’s home buyers. Chuck and Russ, who are white, opened their shop close to Ashburn’s border with Auburn Gresham, the majority-Black neighborhood that begins

a few blocks east of Western Avenue.

“We got a lot of pushback, to be honest with you, from the neighborhood, because most of our clientele was Black,” Chuck says. “All our customers, basically, were coming from the east side, ‘cause there was no video stores over there—got a lot of pushback from the neighbors. I remember there was a couple race wars, like, right on our block.”

Chuck carried a .44 Magnum revolver around 79th Street Video. “We all carried guns,” he says. By his count, 79th Street Video got robbed three times—a low number considering its long life span and the fact that the business collected mostly small bills. “You’re leaving the video store every night with a lot of cash,” Chuck says. “It was a cash business. I don’t even know if we took Visa.”

Word of mouth helped business take off. Chuck says he never cared for advertising. They had regulars who stuck around all day, sometimes because they were waiting on a film another customer had checked out. “They would stand in the store for four or five hours a day, waiting for that tape to come back, so they didn’t miss it,” Chuck says. “They’d be standing there waiting for the tape to come back and get returned and, you know, ‘Hey, I got one.’ Like, almost being annoying to the people bringing them back.” Chuck says some customers were like family, and credits his brother for forming those bonds. “My brother literally hung out with half of these people,” he says.

Russ’s care for his customers helped give 79th Street Video its character. His son Rory, now 40, who worked intermittently at the shop beginning in 1999, recalls his father could draw in customers with stories that were only occasionally exaggerated. “He was, you know, ‘I’m trying to entertain everyone, and this was a crazy thing that happened, I’m going to tell it this way, and by the end of it everyone’s going to be laughing along with it,’” Rory says. “Those were the types of stories that pulled everyone in.” He cared for his customers, too, often asking them about their personal lives and families.

Rory also worked at Midlothian Video and noticed a dramatic difference between his mom’s spot and Russ’s store. “He had customers that would hang out there for two, three hours—they’d eventually leave with their videos, but they’d just want to sit and talk,” Rory says. “It was an interesting dynamic community at his store. And nothing like my mother’s store—you come in, get a movie, you leave, you know, a quick high. Not hanging out for two hours watching various parts of kung fu movies and comparing them—it was unique.”

It helped that Russ loved film as much as his most fervent customers. Even working at ➔



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a video store didn't satiate his desire to watch movies. "He enjoyed his time after a long day at work—10:30 at night, just finished a 12-hour shift, and he'd knock out one or two movies," Rory says. "He never seemed to need a ton of sleep. That was his way to unwind—and then, the next day, be like, 'I just watched this *Iron Monkey* movie, and you won't believe how long that one choreographed fight can go.' And we'd all talk about it. We'd throw it on, watch it, and compare it to other ones."

Russ's voracious appetite for martial arts films and Chuck's affinity for wheeling and dealing helped 79th Street Video amass an unmatched collection of kung fu flicks. "I found a company in New York that was doing some importing from China," Chuck says. "We weren't a thousand percent positive that this stuff was legal—you know, licensed in the States. We were like, 'You got that and you're willing to sell it to us, and it's on VHS and it's got a label?' I'm not going to ask a ton of questions, I'm just like, 'Oh, you got it. Well, everybody wants to see it, and as far as I know it's legit.'"

The shop's reputation as a hub for hard-to-find martial arts movies stuck through the years. "One time, a massive man came in and I'm like, 'I know who that is,'" Rory says. "It was Alonzo Spellman from the Chicago Bears. He heard about my dad's video store, and he heard about the kung fu collection. He shows up and he's got an entourage of, like, four or five buddies with him, and they buy like \$400 worth of kung fu movies."

The Pine brothers sold as well as rented movies—selling would help get old, lesser-loved stock off the shelves. And Chuck's dealings expanded to selling videos outside the store. Within a couple years of opening 79th Street Video, he launched Discount Video, a VHS distribution service he ran out of a conversion van. "A lot of my customers were the small video stores on the east side," he says. "But, truthfully, almost every store in the city of Chicago bought something from me. I really cornered the market." Chuck even sold videos to one of his sisters, who opened her own video rental spot on 51st Street called Warehouse Video.

Chuck mostly distributed adult films. Since 79th Street Video also had a remarkably large trove of porn tapes, he knew how quickly those VHS tapes could fall out of vogue. So he also designed signs advertising sales on old adult stock—four tapes for \$19.95, deep discounts on VHS titles with specific stickers on them—and distributed them to video rental outposts that wanted to get rid of old stock (and, in turn, buy the latest tapes from Chuck). He'd order videos out of catalogs from companies

based in California, buying tapes for roughly \$3 or \$4 each and selling them for about twice as much. He delivered in bulk. "Guys would buy 100 tapes at a time from me, that's \$400 profit," Chuck says. "All's I would do is drop 'em off."

Chuck sold non-adult fare, too. One of his most notable sellers was also one of the most popular rentals at 79th Street Video: the horror flick *Black Devil Doll From Hell*. An aspiring local director named Chester Novell Turner made it in 1984 with a meager budget and video camera; it concerns a churchgoing woman enamored with the titular possessed doll, and features an all-Black cast. *Black Devil Doll* and Turner's second film, *Tales From the Quadead Zone* (1987), have since helped define the era of inexpensive DIY horror filmmaking that arrived with the popularization of VHS camcorders. *Black Devil Doll* is among 3,000 exploitation and horror VHS tapes held in the basement of Yale University's Sterling Library, and notable enough (if only by name) that YaleNews mentioned it in a 2015 story about the collection.

Before *Tales From the Quadead Zone* came out, Chuck remembers, Turner walked into 79th Street Video and played part of the movie for everyone gathered in the shop. The segment, titled "Food For," focuses on an impoverished white family as they sit around the dinner table and wait to split up a morsel of food in front of them. "We're like, 'Dude, this is horrible,'" Chuck says. "I was like, 'Dude, just make *Black Devil Doll 2*.'" When I reach Turner, he says he doesn't remember 79th Street Video. He stopped making movies after *Quadead Zone*, though after Michigan-based Massacre Video rereleased his two pictures on DVD in 2013 he started working on sequels for both. The same year his movies got reissued, the *New York Times* reported that an original VHS copy of *Quadead Zone* sold for more than \$1,300.

Though Chuck sold movies to other rental shops, he did his part to make sure 79th Street Video still stocked material no other shops in town had—at least, no other rental spots he knew about, anyway. "We were the only video store in the city that had *Pink Flamingos*," he says. "We would make people put down \$200 deposits because we only had one copy. People would drive from Wisconsin to get it."

Their other prized videos didn't require deposits but were still difficult to find elsewhere: John Woo's *The Young Dragons* and Jimmy Wang Yu's *Master of the Flying Guillotine*. They had blaxploitation pictures from Fred Williamson and Rudy Ray Moore. They had every episode of the short-lived 1950s TV adaptation of *The Amos 'n' Andy Show*, which Chuck says was among their more popular



Russ Pine at 79th Street Video
COURTESY CHUCK PINE

rentals. If you wanted to see the infamous 1978 cult flick *Faces of Death*, 79th Street Video had it. Any odd karate or horror film Russ could get his hands on ended up in the shop. "He liked horror a lot," Chuck says. "Any horror movie that came out, we had it. Even if it was a piece of crap—you know those really bad ones that are famous for being the worst movie ever? We had all that stuff."

The place practically printed money. Chuck recalls how on one Christmas Eve in the late 80s, when the shop held a holiday special, 79th Street Video rented out 5,000 movies. By then, his interest in the business began to dwindle. "I just stood there and took money," Chuck says. "It sounds fun, but every day? Like, my brother was into the movies, but I wasn't. I worked a register—like a cashier, you know, making a lot of money, though, but I hated it. It was really boring."

In the early 90s Chuck went to chef school and became a silent partner in 79th Street Video; his continued ownership of the shop provided a nice financial cushion when he apprenticed for Rick Bayless at Frontera Grill for a few years in the mid-90s. In 1998, he opened his restaurant, Chuck's Southern Comforts Cafe, and opened a second location about seven years ago. He was out of 79th Street Video entirely by the early 2000s.

Chuck wasn't really around when the store moved to its second and final location at 8110 S. Western. He missed the transition to DVD (though it continued renting VHS tapes). He missed the dwindling rentals following the advent of streaming. He missed when Russ sold off the shop's movies at a discounted rate as he prepared to close up in 2014.

When the store closed, Russ had about 5,000 movies left, which he stored in his

home. After he died in 2015, Rory tried in vain to sell them—he brought the risqué flicks to adult stores, but none wanted them because the tapes weren't in their original cases. His two siblings brought the rest of the videos to Springfield to try to flog them there; Rory says whatever they couldn't sell likely ended up in a dumpster.

The real tragedy for Rory, though, was that the community that had congregated at 79th Street Video was gone. The shop's collection was remarkable, yes, but Rory believes the most important thing his father did was provide a space for the people who loved those movies to congregate. "It was the place for people to get a little break from reality, and that's what movies are—you want to get a little taste of something outside your life," Rory says. "It made a lot of people happy, and also brought my dad a lot of happiness."

Rory caught the martial arts bug from his dad. Around 2001 he bought his first DVD, *Five Deadly Venoms*. "It's arguably one of the most classic old-school movies of all kung fu," he says. When 79th Street Video closed, Russ offered him a deal. "He was getting rid of everything, so he said, 'If you want anything for free, just grab it,'" Rory says. He took home about three or four movies, including *Iron Monkey* and *Blade of Fury*.

Rory has about 50 or 60 kung fu movies now—he keeps the collection small to appease his wife, but he's picky too. In a small way, Rory's collection functions as a tribute to his dad's legacy. He got all the DVDs from 79th Street Video, and bought every movie from his father. "Yeah," Rory says. "And he always gave me a real good deal." 

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Actor Alena Brown prepares to film a scene in *The Spy Who Knew Me*; actors Emily Kwidzinski, Sam Radinsky, Quincy Bane, and Brown with A.B.L.E. cofounders Katie Yohe and Lawrence Kern at the premiere of *The Spy Who Knew Me*

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Willing and A.B.L.E.

An ensemble of performers with Down syndrome creates entertainment for stage and screen.

By ANDREA GRONVALL

Like the earliest practitioners of film, the men and women who made silent pictures, today's writers, directors, producers, and actors often come to moviemaking through other disciplines. Film is a collaborative medium; except for some rarified experimental efforts, it requires a team. But you don't have to go to Hollywood to realize your vision, whether it's for mass distribution or a niche audience. Two recent Chicago independent productions, *The Curse of the Tempest Jewel* (2015), a film noir-style caper, and *The Spy*

Who Knew Me (2017), a riff on James Bond, are narrative features modest in scale but big on ambition, starring a local ensemble of young performers with Down syndrome.

At the helm are writer-director Lawrence Kern and executive artistic director Katie Yohe, husband-and-wife leaders of the non-profit organization A.B.L.E. (Artists Breaking Limits & Expectations). Their cast is comprised of longtime workshop participants who perform annually in A.B.L.E.'s live plays and revues; the movies are an outgrowth of these shows. A.B.L.E.'s mission is to create perfor-

mance experiences for individuals with developmental differences, providing programming that encourages creative growth and self-actualization. Another equally important goal is joy, which is evident while watching the two movies, both accessible on Vimeo.

Petite, vivacious, and highly focused, Yohe, 34, grew up in Pennsylvania. She graduated magna cum laude with a BFA in drama from Syracuse University, where she was part of a theater program, now called All Star C.A.S.T., that introduces typically developed undergrads to community actors with a range of developmental disabilities. "Finally, I felt a reason to be in the room," she recalls.

For a time she was a working actor in the UK at Shakespeare's Globe and the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. After she moved to Chicago in 2007, she gravitated to GiGi's Playhouse, a chain of "achievement centers" that offer therapeutic and education programs for people with Down syndrome. "They do a lot of advocacy," she says. "They do literacy, job training, and occupational therapy, and offer different programs. My friend Mallory Alcala and I started this weekly drama club as volunteers [in 2010], and that morphed into what A.B.L.E. has become." When not teaching pilates to help pay the bills, Yohe works, in her husband's words, "nonstop" on A.B.L.E.; the only hiatus she's taken was to earn her master's degree in applied theatre at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama at the University of London.

The outgoing, athletic Kern, 40, was born in Austin and got the acting bug at eight, through Shakespeare at Winedale at the University of Texas. After graduation from Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas, he became a stage actor, shuttling between UT and London until he took a two-year break to look after his ailing mother. He moved to Chicago for an MFA from the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. There he met the late casting director Jane Alderman, who helped him to audition for *ER* and other TV shows that have filmed here. These days he's paid well as a motion capture actor for NetherRealm Studios, where he's worked on many video games, most recently *Mortal Kombat 11*.

The couple, who met on a blind date, began working together when Yohe brought Kern to one of her classes to teach the students fencing and stage combat; a genuine people person, he was enchanted, and stayed. Every spring, A.B.L.E. builds a classical piece that becomes the season's linchpin. Yohe says,

"Right now, for our teen ensembles, that's *As You Like It*. But prior to the classical performance, we'll spend the fall devising our own piece centering on themes related to the play. In the past, when we've done these devised shows, we've talked a lot with our performers about what's important to them, what they like, and don't like. And so Lawrence has adapted some of these conversations into the film work." The revue featuring A.B.L.E.'s adult ensemble, *A Night at the Movies*, was inspired, she says, "by one of our newer actors, who's on the autism spectrum, and has an encyclopedic brain for movies." Short films starring the cast will punctuate the live performance.

Chief among the techniques created to shoot the feature films is one also used on stage, called dropping in. Yohe explains, "We might have some actors who may not be that literate, or who aren't reading their scripts, or maybe have short-term memory issues. So we'll have one of our teaching artists or facilitators on stage literally right behind an

A NIGHT AT THE MOVIES

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AS YOU LIKE IT

Mon 5/20, 7 PM, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, 800 E. Grand, 312-595-5600, chicagoshakes.com, \$15.

actor, or if we're filming, then we'll be under the table, or off camera elsewhere, and we'll feed the line. Then the actor repeats it back, with whatever flourish is intrinsic to them in terms of their personalities and what they've chosen to do with their characters. Then in the edit we take out the neurotypical adults' voices."

Another technique that Kern has found useful in directing his young film stars is doing the master shot first, not just to have an establishing shot, but to help the actors feel centered through the close-ups and cutaways that follow. It's also helpful to have a monitor on set so that after a take the performers can view it (they love to watch themselves) and work on any adjustments that might need to be made. "They are so hungry for any chance to show what they can do every day," Kern says. "In most movies and TV shows, if there's a character with developmental differences, that's how he/she is defined. Our films are about our characters' [and actors'] desires and wishes—for jobs, for relationships, for fun. We're making a statement by not making a statement. This is a film universe where Down syndrome isn't even a thing." 



From left: Mistress Velvet, Chelsea Ross, and Alejandra Guerrero MARZENA ABRAHAMIK

The new pornographers

Inside the world of “beautifully shot, ethically made, and sexy smut”

By S. NICOLE LANE

“The answer to bad porn isn’t no porn,” the feminist sexologist, editor, and porn actress Annie Sprinkle once said. “It’s to try and make porn better.” Pornography is now a \$97 billion global industry—the Pornhub website averages 92 million visitors daily. Much of what appears on popular porn sites is stolen content or films that were produced in unhygienic, unethical, and unsafe circumstances. But there’s also better porn out there.

Feminist and ethical adult-film production

houses want to provide porn that’s professional, empowering, political, and consensual, and disrupts the usual representation of heteronormative sex in adult films. Ethical porn means fair wages, fair labor practices, no sex trafficking, no pressure, and safe sex for everyone. Feminist porn pushes these ideas further by including the representation of diversity in bodies, gender identity, ability, race, and sexual interests. Power in pleasure is at its core.

Eden Newmar, a Chicago-based pro domme, porn actor, and occasional escort, came into the adult film industry when they were 18 and

homeless. “Safe porn is oriented towards depicting sexual acts where all parties are giving enthusiastic consent the entire time,” they explain. “It recognizes the validity of the labor of the people who act in and produce the films/photos/etc.” Newmar works with the Lust Garden, a Minneapolis-based independent project that, in the words of its website, aims to produce and distribute “beautifully shot, ethically made, and sexy smut.”

Run by performer Rococo Royale, the collective uses contracts that are negotiable based on how the actor prefers to be paid

(either through up-front payment, royalties, or content-sharing options) and charges its viewers on a sliding scale (between \$6 and \$10 for 30 minutes) in order to make porn more accessible; people of color, LGBTQI folks, people with disabilities, and sex workers can pay what they can afford. Newmar and other performers have the chance to approve both the footage and ad copy and request edits. Other websites such as XConfessions, the Crash Pad Series, Bellesa, Indie Porn Revolution, and Lady Cheeky offer DVDs, subscriptions, Patreon support, or online tips. Feminist porn is still a niche market, though, and many smaller production companies are only breaking even.

But the loss of income is worth escaping the exploitation that’s common on mainstream porn sets. Many actors have horror stories of being forced to perform sexual acts that they found uncomfortable or painful; this is a disturbing reality of the adult film industry. Newmar finds that mainstream porn has created a great divide between content creators and consumers. “It is compulsory heterosexuality at its worst,” Newmar says, “even when the scenes are lesbian or cuckold scenes.” The goal of the Lust Garden and other producers of ethical and feminist films is to depict realistic and consensual safe sex.

Renowned feminist porn directors such as Erika Lust and Tristan Taormino get to know their performers and foster relationships between scene partners in order to capture genuine sexual desire on camera. This approach is revolutionary in the sense that the actors’ pleasure is integral to the film. A common goal for many feminist porn production houses is to dismantle the male gaze, a term coined by Laura Mulvey in the 1970s that describes women, or femme-identifying people, being put on display solely for male pleasure. In mainstream porn, the cis male climax is king, and the cum shot is the moneymaker. In feminist pornography, the antiquated idea of cis male pleasure is being abandoned to depict more genuine and authentic femme orgasms, pleasure, and control.

The filmmakers also aim to create films with intersectional and body-positive imagery that portrays wide spectrums of sexuality and identity. There’s an emphasis on natural body

types: body hair, the application of lube, and plus-sized performers are all depicted and celebrated.

That respect for performers extends off camera. Many directors allow actors to negotiate their pay rates and support them choosing their own partners for a scene. Many are also femmes who want to create a more inviting environment on set and pay attention to food and hygiene: basic human needs, basic human rights.

Feminist pornography isn't a new concept, by any means; it's been around since 1984 when retired porn actress Candida Vadala (also known as Candida Royale) founded Femme Productions. She went on to create movies with fulfilling plots, elaborate sets, and what she called "positive sexual role modeling." (Of course, feminist pornography has also had its opposition. Anti-porn activist Gail Dines told the *Daily Beast* in 2012 that "anyone willing to feed off women's bodies and use them as raw materials to make a profit has no right to call themselves feminists." More recently, a three-day queer and feminist porn festival in London was forced to relocate after protests.)

There is no denying that porn plays a significant role in shaping our cultural values as well

as cultural trends. Many feminist porn producers seek to create content that will positively impact viewers, to give them something more artfully libidinous than your average smut.

"I really want to focus on sex and power," says Alejandra Guerrero, a Colombian-born fetish and erotic artist who has experience in the mainstream adult industry. After working closely with actors in the adult film industry in LA, she understands the significance of having a woman behind the camera. "A lot of people who contact me like that I am a woman. It makes them more comfortable. I don't want to objectify women, I want to make the subject feel at ease." Though she's no longer in film, she stages elaborate fetish parties around the city where she has projected some of her moving-image work.

Multidisciplinary artist Chelsea Ross, like Guerrero and many other ethical porn directors, seeks to eradicate exploitation. Her first independent erotic film, *Spin*, premiered at this year's Hump! Film Festival, Dan Savage's touring fest of dirty shorts. It exemplifies the kind of work she and other feminist and ethical porn directors are trying to create.

Spin begins with a scene of a trans man scrolling through his phone. He picks up a vibrator and begins to masturbate. Then the film takes us into his fantasy: a group of people of various body types and identities dressed in glitter, bondage gear, and lingerie playing a game of spin the bottle that evolves into group sex. "Consent and communication are key," is the first line of dialogue we hear from one character; this person has a purple mustache, pink eyeglasses, and glitter scattered across their chest and cheekbones.

Using split screens, Ross interjects scenes of various characters engaging in a variety of acts that range from oral sex to simply kissing in an experimental way. Eventually, the music slows, the lights dim, and a plethora of strap-ons, harnesses, and chokers come out. We see the main character having sex on the couch with a partner who is wearing a strap-on. He closes his eyes, and when he opens them again, he's back on his bed. The film ends with a shot of a small smile crossing his face—an affirmation of satisfaction.

Ross met several times with her actors before shooting began in order to discuss consent, dislikes, desires, and boundaries so that the actual sex scenes would be lightly directed. "We also made sure there was space and time for aftercare," she says. (The scene before the credits shows the actors kissing and caressing one another.) Unlike the director of a mainstream video, who would conclude with an

explosive and dramatic orgasm, Ross cuts the film before the money shot. She understands that a facial isn't the happy ending all of us are seeking when watching porn.

Performers find their own happy ending. Premier African dominatrix Mistress Velvet, who requires her clients to read Black feminist theory, has starred in a few Lust Garden films. Her experience, she says, was a "healing alternative to the mainstream pornography that I often don't feel connected to." She says that the safety factors included in her experience with the independent production house were "absolutely refreshing."

Mistress Velvet has built her community online and in Chicago. Because she finds her white male clients exhausting, feminist literature serves as her "rule book to pass on to them." She says, "It's been really cathartic to build these kinds of teachable moments into power play. It's my big 'fuck you, I ain't the one!' to the lazy, racist, traumatic interpersonal dynamics that make up most of my experiences with white men." Her video work provides a similar catharsis.

For many actors and sex workers, creating their own content provides a safe way to have full agency over their bodies and sexual partners—and their own visions and fantasies. "Sex work can be a microcosm of larger prob-

lematic societal structures," explains Mistress Velvet. The violence that occurs outside of work has the dismal potential to be replicated within a sex worker's community. "Creating indie content with other queer workers and artists of color is a deliberate choice," says Mistress Velvet. "It provides me with safety, community, and agency."

"I wish porn would be treated with the same respect we give our coffee—which incidentally costs about the same as a clip," says Newmar. "We should want to know and pay for porn that is ethically made and sourced, fairly compensated, done with passion, and focused on an enjoyable experience for providers as well as consumers."

Real sex is full of fumbling, condoms, body hair, and laughing at mistakes. It's gooey and messy. It isn't all of the glamour and glitz we see coming out of production houses in LA or NYC. Feminist porn shows sex that two (or more) people are reveling in together, not just another notch on a cis male belt. More importantly, alternative porn introduces options to the mainstream that are easily accessible. As Chelsea Ross says, "Consumers can make informed choices that align with their values, and also their libidos." 

 @snicolelane



Portrait of a Domme  ALEJANDRA GUERRERO



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Band of outsiders

There's a place for everyone at Full Spectrum Features.

By CODY CORRALL

The first time Eugene Sun Park saw himself represented in a film, he was 25.

The film was Justin Lin's *Better Luck Tomorrow*, a 2002 drama about a group of studious Asian American teenagers who engage in petty crime to cut loose from their responsibilities. While the film still fed into stereotypes, it was the first time Park was exposed to an almost-entirely Asian American cast.

"I spent most of my youth never seeing someone onscreen who reflected my identity or experience," Park says. "The only times I would see an Asian American, particularly an Asian American male, the character was the subject of ridicule or seen as a joke. He was either a foreign exchange student with broken English or was a martial arts person."

Park cites this lifelong frustration with a lack of dynamic and intersectional representations in media as the driving force behind Full Spectrum Features, a four-year-old 501(c)(3) nonprofit film production house and distributor based in Lakeview.

Its mission, as the name suggests, is to diversify Chicago's independent film scene by amplifying the work of women, queer people, and filmmakers of color. Of the films in Full Spectrum's current catalog (eight completed, seven in development or production), 91 percent are directed by women and 55 percent showcase queer people in prominent speaking roles. (By contrast, according to Full Spectrum's website, just 7 percent of Hollywood films are directed by women and less than 1 percent feature queer people in prominent speaking roles.)

Park never studied filmmaking or film theory in a classroom, but he did get a pretty good picture of the Hollywood film industry by working at various assistant jobs at talent agencies and production companies in Los Angeles.

It wasn't a picture he particularly liked.

"I was extremely frustrated by the industry and how unreceptive they were to stories about people of color in particular," Park says. "Frustrating is an understatement."

Park was so frustrated, in fact, that he left

the industry altogether to study philosophy for almost a decade.

Five years into his PhD program, in 2012, he dropped out and moved to Chicago. During his time in academia, he'd noticed the dramatic changes in the film industry. No longer was filmmaking something only for an elite few with vast resources and industry connections. It was now open to anybody with a laptop and a digital camera.

"I saw friends who I had gone to college with who were making incredible films that were going to Sundance and SXSW and I was shocked to see that they were making these films on their laptops with a camera they bought at Best Buy," Park says.

He realized that if Hollywood wasn't making the types of films he wanted to see, he could make them himself.

His first project was *The Orange Story* (2016), a narrative short film he produced and cowrote (Erika Street directed) about a Japanese American man preparing to leave his home for an incarceration camp during World War II. Jason Matsumoto, a director of pricing at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange and director of the Japanese drum ensemble Ho Etsu Taiko, joined the team as a producer, focusing on securing grants and establishing connections with the local Japanese American community. Park and Matsumoto found that there were a large number of filmmaking grants available only to nonprofit organizations. This became the catalyst for them to start Full Spectrum and broaden the accessibility of filmmaking.

Both Park and Matsumoto wanted to support not just their own work at Full Spectrum, but also the work of filmmakers who wouldn't be easily supported by Hollywood—those exploring different identities, different stories, and different ways of telling them.

"For me it has always been less about I need to be the writer or director of this piece and more of I really want this story to be out there in the world and I want people to hear it," Park says.

Those stories include, among others, *Make Out Party* (2018), a queer candy-coated com-



Eve Rydberg in *Make Out Party*; behind the scenes of *I Am Not Broken*

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edy of errors by Emily Esperanza; *Signature Move* (2017), a lesbian wrestling romantic comedy by Jennifer Reeder; *Holy Trinity* (currently in postproduction), an experimental portrait of a dominatrix-turned-medium by Molly Hewitt; and *The T*, a web series about the lives of fictional LGBTQ Chicagoans by Bea Cordelia and Daniel Kyri.

There's always room to grow when it comes to representation, though. Full Spectrum doesn't currently offer films that focus on disability—something Park is trying to change in the near future.

"We're always looking to be fuller in how we define Full Spectrum," Park says.

While the name refers to which stories are told and who is telling them, it also describes the different styles of filmmaking. Much of Full Spectrum's catalog is experimental—often featuring nontraditional narrative structures, unique aspect ratios and cinematography, or stylized performance art that turns into an immersive experience known as "expanded cinema."

"If you want to include a wide range of storytellers, you have to be open to and support a wide range of ways of telling those stories," Park says. "The conventions of Hollywood filmmaking and storytelling that we're very used to arguably have built into them the

systems of patriarchy and so on that we're actively trying to work against."

Full Spectrum aims to correct the representation of marginalized people not just through representation in film, but by changing the structure of what might be an old-fashioned method of filmmaking to begin with.

"If we just take a broad range of identities and try to tell stories using the techniques and tropes of Hollywood, I'm not sure that we've done much to truly accomplish or support diversity in storytelling," Park says.

The catalog of styles and storytellers Full Spectrum is able to support is due to the diversity of Chicago and the filmmakers who live here, Park says. Chicago's film scene also feels comparatively less demanding and rigid than those in LA or New York, which can make it easier for an unconventional idea like *Make Out Party* to turn into a reality.

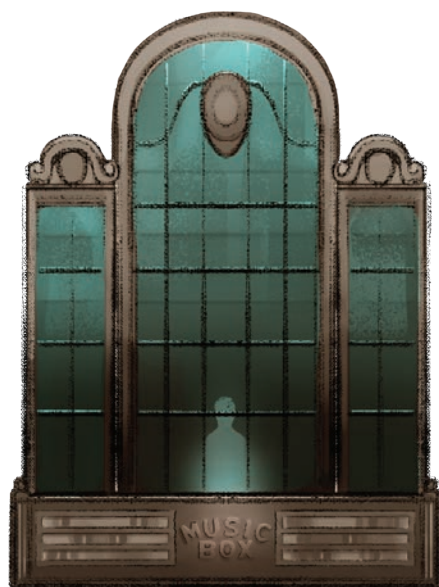
"The people who are here and are making films in Chicago, in some ways they are doing that almost defiantly," Park says. "There's a certain type of person who's thinking about filmmaking in a different way that's going to be here and make work here. There's a unique kind of openness to creativity among the filmmaking community here." 

 @dykediscourse

Ghost world

Back in 1977, Whitey lay down and died in the Music Box Theatre. He's still there.

By **GEORGIA HAMPTON**



ANNA GRACE NOLIN

The Music Box Theatre was built in 1929 and it feels the way many older, well-preserved buildings feel: beautiful, a little mysterious, and deeply, deeply haunted. It's the exact sort of place one would expect to see a ghost.

On a busy night, it's easy to be distracted by other things—the glowing red neon light from the marquee, the smell of the popcorn machine. But being there alone, late at night, that's a different story. And it was on one of those nights not too long ago (OK, 2009) that Lindsey Jacobs saw Whitey, the ghost of the Music Box.

Whitey was a manager at the Music Box for 30 or 40 years, and died in 1977. As with many ghost stories, the details are vague. There was a rumor that Whitey had died in the theater: he lay down for a nap on one of the benches and never woke up. The bench is still there, in the theater lounge, though Jacobs says that it has since been reupholstered.

Jacobs, now a technical manager for the film side of the company, was a projectionist when she first came to the theater ten years ago. "The Music Box is just super creepy in general, and it's especially creepy when you're one of the last people there," she says. "And as the projectionist, you're shutting down every night."

Back then, the theater still showed movies on 35 mm film. This meant that Jacobs was responsible for changing over one reel of film to the next in both booths. The process is fairly straightforward: "You watch the little window for that cigarette burn," she explains, "and then you have to [switch] the audio and the picture at the same time. So you go down [to the projection booth] a few minutes early, and you just sit, and stare, and wait."

One night Jacobs was in the downstairs booth in Theater 2 waiting for the changeover. The room was small and she knew she was alone, but she felt like someone was watching

her. "Finally I was like, 'I know I have at least 30 seconds, I can [check].'" She turned around, and there was a man standing there, staring at her.

He wasn't exactly transparent, but he wasn't a tangible human being, either. He was kind of like the ghosts on the Haunted Mansion ride at Disney World, she explains: tall with a solemn face, wearing an old suit. He didn't say anything to her, and she didn't say anything to him.

But then it was time for the changeover. "[I] turn around, do my changeover, turn back around, and there's nothing there," she says. "And I stood in the booth for a few minutes and I was like, 'What the fuck just happened?'"

Years later, another Music Box employee showed Jacobs a picture of Whitey from his managerial days. She'd never seen a picture of him before, but she recognized him immediately. "This is the best part," she says. "Dude was wearing that suit. It was the same suit!"

That night in the projection booth was the only time she has ever seen a ghost. But she's not the only one who has felt Whitey's presence at the theater. Manager Ernestina "Ernie" Garcia says she's felt someone standing behind her several times, and even heard a voice calling her name in the lobby after hours. But she is quick to say that Whitey isn't scary. "I like to say he keeps an eye out," she says.

And Jacobs agrees. She thinks Whitey was checking up on her that night, "making sure I was making that changeover, making sure the masking was correct. I mean, I made the changeover, it was perfect. So he was doing his job there."

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Sliding into @MusicBoxTheatre's DMs

An investigation into the best movie theater Twitter in town.

By BRIANNA WELLEN

“I think the Music Box Theatre Twitter is flirting with me!” one of my cinephile friends told me a few years ago after an exchange of several responsive, charming tweets about movies. Alas, upon further investigation of the social media feed, we discovered the true love of whoever was running it was only movies, and they were eager to engage with any- and everyone who shared that passion. But still the question remained: who was the person behind the 90-year-old movie house’s feed?

Since 2015, about a year before my friend fell in love, it's been Buck LePard, the Music Box's senior operations manager (who has a pretty solid Twitter feed himself). Recently I slid into the Music Box Theatre's DMs to chat with him about the power of social media and the movies. This conversation has been edited for clarity.

@BriannaWellen: Did you jump right in with the voice and style you use now or did it take a while to find what worked best for you and your followers?

@MusicBoxTheatre: I kept up what has really worked for us, while also adding my own style and ideas. And over time, the type of material on the feed has expanded, it started off as very cut-and-dried movie and event listings.

Can you think of a turning point when things like GIFs and more interactions with followers became part of the mix?

Film is a visual medium, so sharing GIFs, film clips, trailers, screenshots, closeups of 35 mm and 70 mm filmstrips, etc. became second nature as the best way to represent the Music Box. And I love talking about movies, so getting into conversations with folks is typically very fun. It's not always them coming to us. I've had a lot of interactions where I'll see a

person post a GIF or something from a movie like *Heathers*, and I'll tell them, "Hey that's playing at the Music Box in two weeks," and they'll get excited and come to the movie.

Do you find that's helpful in getting the word out that the Music Box screens films that some people might not expect?

It's helpful for getting the word out, and it's also helped us decide what screenings might be worth doing in the future, since the things I'm posting might not always have to do with screenings that are currently on our schedule. For instance, last year I posted a random tweet about *Drop Dead Gorgeous*, and folks got pretty excited about the possibility of us playing it. Off of that, we scheduled it for midnight screenings and we had over 300 people show up each night. Having social media as an easy way to connect and alert our followers has increased what we're capable of, since it's such easy and immediate access.

Have you fulfilled a lot of wishes for screenings through Twitter?

Definitely. We'll have folks make suggestions or requests, and I keep track of them.

A couple years ago, before *Baby Driver* came out, we were doing an Edgar Wright retrospective of his previous films. It was going to include all his movies except for one, a comedy-western he made when he was 20 called *A Fistful of Fingers*. It had only played once in the U.S. and it's impossible to book. He's been to the Music Box before and follows us, and when he found out about the series, he reached out on Twitter about getting the film to us. He sent us the film, pre-show clips, and a special intro, and that probably wouldn't have happened if we didn't have the Twitter relationship.

Are there any especially memorable or strange Twitter interactions that stand out in your mind? Especially when taking into consideration that the person on the other end is talking to a movie theater?

Haha, well I do take into account that our tweets are coming from a movie theater instead of a person, and I never want us to cross the line into “Crass Corporate Account.”

I did end up very busy last election night, because I promised that if people sent us a picture of their “I Voted” wristband or sticker, I’d send them a picture of Kevin Kline (a personal favorite performer of mine).

It does seem like the Music Box Twitter often becomes a Kevin Kline fan account.

And I make no apologies for that.

 @BriannaWellen

Film festivals and special events

Extra movie love from now through November

By PATRICK FRIEL

FESTIVALS

Chicago Critics Film Festival

Presented by the Chicago Film Critics Association. 5/17-5/23, Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport, 773-871-6604, chicago-criticsfilmfestival.com, \$8-\$18, \$150 festival pass.

Juggernaut Film Festival Science fiction and fantasy films presented by the Otherworld Theatre Company. 6/2-6/3, Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport, 815-277-7855, juggernautfilmfestival.com, \$20, \$50 per day, \$80-\$190 weekend pass.

Chicago Underground Film Festival The longest-running underground film festival returns. 6/5-6/9, Logan Theatre, 2646 N. Milwaukee, 773-998-1082, cuff.org, \$100-\$250 festival pass.

Cinepocalypse "A week of ass-kicking genre movies." 6/13-6/20, Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport, 773-871-6604, music-boxtheatre.com, \$125 four days, \$175 full festival.

Windy City International Film Festival Independent film fest. 7/18-7/21, Victory Gardens Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln, windycityfilmfest.com, tickets on sale in June.

Reelabilities Disability Film Festival "Dedicated to sharing the human experience of disability through art and film." August, details TBA, reelabilities.org.

Black Harvest Film Festival Features and shorts about the African American, Black African, and African diasporic experience. 8/2-8/29, Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State, 312-846-2800, siskelfilmcenter.org, \$12.

Reeling: The Chicago LGBTQ+ International Film Festival This long-running queer film festival is a presentation of Chicago filmmakers. 9/19-9/29, various venues, 773-293-1447, reelingfilmfestival.org, \$11-\$18, \$125 festival pass.

Chicago South Asian Film Festival 9/19-9/22, various venues, csaff.org.

Alder International Short Film Festival 9/26-9/29, Repertorio Latino Theater Company, 3622 S. Morgan, 312-880-8251, alderfilmfestival.com.

Chicago South Side Film Festival Focused on films about the south side of Chicago. 9/27-10/6, south-sidefilmfest.org.

Shortcut 100 Independent Film Festival Independent shorts from emerging filmmakers. 9/28, shortcut-100-film-festival.jimdosite.com.

Chicago Horror Film Festival 9/28-9/29, chicagohorrorfest.com.

Chicago International Social Change Film Festival 9/28-9/30, socialchange.site/filmfestival.

(In)Justice for All Film Festival Films about the criminal justice system and incarceration. 10/3-10/12, various venues, 847-922-3361, injusticeforallff.com.

Chicago International Film Festival The granddaddy of Chicago film festivals. 10/16-10/27, River East 21, 322 E. Illinois, 312-332-3456, chicagofilmfestival.com, \$140-\$265 festival pass.

Collected Voices: Chicago's Ethnographic Film Festival Films that "explore the intersection of race, age, class, gender, and sexuality." 10/15-10/31, various venues, collectedvoicesfilmfestival.com, \$10-\$35, \$25 pass before 10/6.

Little México Film Festival A shorts festival with the theme "feminism" this year. 10/19, Citlalin Art Gallery and Theater, 2005 S. Blue Island, limefilmfest.com.

Various Artists Independent Film Festival 10/12-10/13, 2112 Chicago, 4245 N. Knox, 312-659-7885, vaiff.com.

Chicago International Children's Film Festival Presented by Facets. 11/1-11/10, various venues, 773-281-9075, festival.facets.org.

Chi-Town Multicultural Film Festival 11/2, 312-443-2576, cmfilm-festival.org.

Chicago Festival of Israeli Cinema 11/7-11/17, various venues, israeli-filmchi.org.

Avant Edge Film Festival The local iteration of a network of festivals overseen by Critical Edge Film Festival. 11/8, ceffnetwork.org.

Chicago International REEL Shorts Film Festival Organized by Project Chicago. 11/8-11/9, Chicago Filmmakers, 5720 N. Ridge, projectchicago.com.

Black Alphabet Film Festival Black-focused LGBTQ films. 11/9-11/10, blackalphabet.org.

Blow-Up Arthouse Film Festival 11/10-11/11, blowupfilmfest.com.

Chicago Polish Film Festival November, details TBA, pjfamerica.org.

ADDITIONAL FILM EVENTS

Most venues and series are still planning their summer and fall events, but here is a selection of highlights of confirmed upcoming screenings.



© MARZENA ABRAHAMIK

Chicagoland Shorts A juried program of local short films. 5/16, 7 PM, MCA Chicago, 220 E. Chicago Ave., 312-397-4010, mcchicago.org. **FREE**

Barbara Hammer Retrospective Two programs of restored prints by queer experimental film pioneer Barbara Hammer. 5/23-5/24, 7 PM, Block Cinema, 40 Arts Circle Dr., Evanston, 847-491-4000, blockmuseum.northwestern.edu. **FREE**

Doc Films Festival Two days of new and retrospective screenings and live music. 5/25-5/26: 10 AM, Max Palevsky Cinema, 1212 E. 59th, 773-702-8574, docfilms.uchicago.edu, \$9-\$24 one-day pass, \$14-\$39 two-day pass.

50th Anniversary of the Jazz Institute of Chicago The Chicago Film Society presents a series of jazz-focused films in tribute. May-December, various venues, 773-850-0141, jazzinchicago.org, \$7-\$11.

Millennium Park Summer Film Series The City of Chicago's outdoor screening series. 6/4-8/20, 6:30 PM, Jay Pritzker Pavilion, 201 E. Randolph St., chicago.gov. **FREE**

A Tribute to Bill Siegel Kartemquin Films copresents this double feature of *The Weather Underground* and *The Trials of Muhammad Ali*, directed by Chicago documentary maker Bill Siegel, who passed away in December. 6/5, 7 PM, Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport, 773-871-6604, music-boxtheatre.com, \$15.

Remembering Todd A memorial screening for local filmmaker and former Chicago Filmmakers program director Todd Lillethun, who passed away last fall. 7/20, Chicago Filmmakers, 5720 N. Ridge, 773-293-1447, chicagofilm-makers.org.

Music Box Theatre 90th Anniversary A week of special events for the iconic theater's birthday. 8/22-8/29, Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport, 773-871-6604, musicboxtheatre.com.

Chicago Onscreen Local Film Showcase Screenings of Chicago-made films. 8/26-8/31, various Chicago Park District locations, chicagoparkdistrict.com. **FREE**

Abbas Kiarostami Retrospective Films by the late Iranian master director. September-October, Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State, 312-846 2800, siskelfilmcenter.org, \$12.

Music Box of Horrors 24-hour horror film marathon. 10/19-10/20, Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave., 773-871-6604, musicboxtheatre.com. **Q**

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Days and Nights in the Forest
PRIYA / THE KOBAL COLLECTION

REVIEW

Out of thin air

In *Days and Nights in the Forest* Satyajit Ray conjures truth and insight through the most ordinary of interactions.

By **BEN SACHS**

To explain why *Days and Nights in the Forest* (1970), playing this Wednesday in Doc Films's valuable Satyajit Ray retrospective, is a masterpiece is a bit like explaining why flowers are beautiful: the film's glories are so natural and self-evident that describing them feels redundant. One of the airiest of great movies, *Days and Nights* seems lightweight and plotless—yet it reveals countless insights into its characters, setting, and theme. Along with *Aparajito* (1956), *Charulata* (1964), and *The Home and the World* (1984), it represents the epitome of Ray's talents—his ability to divine universal meaning from observations of local behavior, his nuanced approach to character, the way he makes time's passing seem mellifluous—yet it displays these talents so modestly that you may not recognize them at first. The closest Western equivalent may be Jean Renoir's *The Rules of the Game* in that it's an ensemble comedy-drama about romance and class relations that requires multiple viewings

to reveal its true mastery. Ray's screenplay (a free adaptation of a novel by Sunil Gangopadhyay) is, up until its climax, a carefully plotted collection of nonevents, and his direction focuses on character and setting. The insights seem offhanded and casual despite being profound.

The insights of *Days and Nights* emerge from a series of contrasts—between urban and rural life, men and women, innocence and corruption, love and lust—that Ray organizes symphonically. Ray biographer Andrew Robinson has likened the achievement to Mozart's music in its “unobtrusive patterning of motifs, wonderful range of voices, and capacity to be serious by being humorous.” The film's most musical quality, however, may be its harmoniousness. Ray looks at a group of characters throughout—there's no single hero, but rather several subjects whose development we're meant to consider in tandem. Frequently filming in medium shot, Ray encourages viewers to look at the characters collectively; this vi-

sual approach works hand-in-hand with Ray's understated storytelling. The complexities, both visual and thematic, emerge from interactions between the characters and between the characters and their environment.

Sometimes *Days and Nights* doesn't even feel like a narrative, but rather a sociological survey of 20-something professionals from Kolkata at the end of the 1960s. The film begins as four men drive through the northeast Indian countryside, bickering about the plans for the trip they're taking there. These men are Ashim (Soumitra Chattopadhyay), Sanjoy (Subhendu Chattopadhyay), Shekhar (Robi Ghosh), and Hari (Shamit Bhanja). Back in Kolkata all are overworked and unlucky in love, but Ray doesn't reveal these details just yet. The opening scenes emphasize the landscape, the men's camaraderie, and their manner of conversation (note how these educated folk freely intersperse English words into their Bengali).

Ray interrupts the laid-back vibe with a short, shocking flashback of Hari having a violent argument with his girlfriend; this hints at subsequent disruptions to the cheerful tone. The next occurs only a few minutes later when the men, stopping in a village, talk down to the naive local, Lakha, whom they recruit to take them to a bungalow in the Palamu forest. One senses the arrogance of the urbanites, even if they don't. They're more self-aware, though, when they arrive at the bungalow and bribe their way into a room after they admit they don't have permission from the local government to stay there. “Thank God for corruption,” Ashim cynically quips after the groundskeeper accepts his bribe.

This scene reflects the pervasiveness of corruption among the Kolkata business class, though less in the fact of the bribe than in Ashim's nonchalant view of it. Ray subtly condemns the corruption of his group of heroes in subsequent scenes that show the men getting drunk at the village bar and making fools of themselves in front of the locals. (Their lofty behavior in front of the people who serve them at the bungalow is revealing as well.) Yet these men never come across as caricatures or even

bad people. Ray seldom put villains in his films because, as a great humanist, he saw the best in almost everyone. Such is the case with the men of *Days and Nights*—their sensitivity and good humor shine through even when they act boorishly. When the two beautiful women staying at the summer home next door arrive, the heroes prove themselves gracious and chivalrous as well.

Ray's women were generally wiser than his male characters, and in *Days and Nights*, Aparna (Sharmila Tagore) and Jaya (Kaberi Basu) demonstrate good manners and common sense in their interactions with the villagers as well as the heroes, whom they generally view with bemusement. The film's second half dramatizes the growing familiarity between the men and women, and the developments unfold casually, allowing the chemistry between the six characters to reverberate and the tensions between them to simmer. Ray doesn't depict anything spectacular (the interactions consist of some strolls through the forest, a game of badminton, and the like), yet his subtle manipulation of pacing and visual composition are constantly fascinating. The film reaches its zenith during an afternoon picnic on the men's third day in the forest. Sitting under a tree, the women teach the men a memory game where the players sit in a circle and take turns adding to a list of famous people's names. Ray stages and edits the game dynamically; each turn reveals some fundamental quality of the person speaking. (The director often referred to the sequence as one of his crowning achievements.)

Ray expands on the polyphony of the memory game scene in the crosscutting of the film's final half-hour, when the characters split up after the picnic and wander around a local carnival. Shekhar gambles, Hari propositions a local woman for sex, Ashim goes for a walk with Aparna, and Sanjoy has an intimate conversation with Jaya. Two of these subplots end to the male characters' satisfaction, while two do not, and in cutting between them all, Ray manages to evoke the complexity of life itself. The emotional revelations of this section transcend the characters' class and educational backgrounds and speak to universal truths about sex, power, and romantic longing. What makes *Days and Nights* such a magical experience is that these truths seem to materialize out of thin air. **R**

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Long Day's Journey Into Night

NOW PLAYING

RR The Area

David Schalliol's documentary is an eye-opening saga of resistance in Englewood's 20th Ward to a land grab by the Norfolk Southern Railway, which, after the housing market crash in 2008, quietly began buying and demolishing homes to expand its 47th Street intermodal shipping yard. Over five years the indefatigable activist Deborah Payne, galvanized by the steady decimation of her beloved neighborhood around 57th Street and Normal, rallies other residents to oppose the railway and protest the city's lack of interest in homeowners who are being offered only fair-market value for their properties amid a historic plunge in housing prices. After the City Council—including the two-timing 20th Ward alderman, Willie Cochran—votes to sell off 105 vacant city lots to the railroad, Payne (who's listed in the credits as a producer) turns to preserving the quality of life on the occupied blocks. **—ANDREA GRONVALL 93 min. Schalliol, Payne, and producer Brian Ashby attend the screening. Thu 5/16, 7 PM. Northwestern University Block Museum of Art [FREE](#)**

N Bauhaus Spirit: 100 Years of Bauhaus

A century has passed since the inception of Bauhaus, the radical artistic movement founded by Walter Gropius. In *Bauhaus Spirit*, directors Niels Bolbrinker and Thomas Tielsch aim to chronicle not only the origins of the movement, but also how it intersects with aspects of contemporary life—from art, architecture, science, and even government. There are thoughtful questions provoked in *Bauhaus Spirit*: how can the principles of Bauhaus solve current problems of sustainability, development, and affordable housing? What does a Bauhaus-inspired utopia look like and how can we get there? But for a film bursting at the seams with ultra-modern artistic potential, *Bauhaus Spirit* surprisingly lacks creativity in its presentation and often feels formulaic and uninspiring. **—CODY CORRALL 90 min. Fri 5/10, 2 and 6 PM; Sat 5/11, 2 PM; Sun 5/12, 3 PM; Mon 5/13, 6 PM; Tue 5/14, 6 PM; Wed 5/15, 8:15 PM; and Thu 5/16, 6 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center**

RR Blade Runner: The Final Cut

Not to be confused with the mislabeled “director’s cut,” this seventh edition of Ridley Scott’s SF masterpiece (1982) is arguably the first to get it all right,

finally telling the whole story comprehensibly. This visionary look at Los Angeles in 2019—a singular blend of grime and glitter that captures both the horror and the allure of Reagan-era capitalism—was a commercial flop when it first appeared. Loosely adapted from Philip K. Dick’s *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, it follows the hero (Harrison Ford) as he tracks down and kills “replicants,” or androids. Much of the film’s erotic charge and moral and ideological ambiguity stem from the fact that these characters are very nearly the only ones we care about. (We never know for sure whether Ford is a replicant himself.) With Sean Young, Rutger Hauer, Daryl Hannah, Edward James Olmos, Joe Turkel, and William J. Sanderson. **—JONATHAN ROSENBAUM R, 117 min. A fundraiser screening for educational programs at Chicago Public Library; tickets are \$30 in advance, \$35 at the door and include a post-screening reception. Wed 5/15, 6 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center**

N Charlie Says

One might think that director Mary Harron (*American Psycho*, *I Shot Andy Warhol*) would fashion a biting tale about the Manson family and its murder spree in the summer of 1969. Yet it is the lack of satire and style that reverberates through this humdrum film, yet another about the mythic “girls” who followed cult leader and failed musician Charles Manson (Matt Smith) over sanity’s edge. There’s promise in focusing on one of the more skeptical of Manson’s followers, Leslie Van Houten (Hannah Murray), and in using visits by a well-meaning graduate student (Merritt Wever) to the incarcerated Van Houten, Susan Atkins (Marianne Rendón), and Patricia Krenwinkel (Sosie Bacon) as a framing device. However, the movie’s depiction of these lost flower children, and what rendered them susceptible to Manson’s brainwashing, is frustratingly shapeless and shallow. Smith and Murray are miscast, looking and acting like rough drafts of their real-life counterparts, while the film itself is plodding and visually uninspired. A final note of wish fulfillment suggests what might have been if the talented team of Harron and screenwriter Guinevere Turner (*American Psycho*, *The Notorious Bettie Page*) had played more with fantasy, the state in which many idealists of the 1960s lived until the Manson murders, among other tragedies, punctured the spell. **—LEAH PICKETT 104 min. Fri 5/10, 3:45 and 8 PM; Sat 5/11, 3:45 and 8:15 PM; Sun 5/12, 5:30 PM; Mon 5/13, 8:30 PM; Tue 5/14, 6 PM; Wed 5/15, 8:30 PM; and Thu 5/16, 6 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center**

Chicken with Vinegar

One of the more flagrant injustices of foreign-film distribution has been the near total eclipse of Claude Chabrol in this country. This delightful, acidic 1985 mystery—set in a corrupt small town rife with land speculation, murder, and diverse other intrigues—was a big enough hit in France to prompt a sequel the following year (*Inspecteur Lavardin*), but American audiences weren’t allowed so much as a peek at it. Adapted by Dominique Roulet and Chabrol from Roulet’s novel *Une mort en trop*, this sexy and adroit intrigue starring Jean Poiret, Stephane Audran, and Michel Bouquet is one of Chabrol’s best efforts in his lighter vein, and proves that the classic French cinema has never been quite as dead as U.S. release policies have suggested. In French with subtitles. **—JONATHAN ROSENBAUM 110 min. Mon 5/13, 7 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films**

Double Indemnity

James M. Cain’s pulp classic (1944), as adapted by Raymond Chandler and directed by Billy Wilder. Barbara Stanwyck is perfectly cast as a Los Angeles dragon lady burdened with too much time, too much money, and a dull husband. Fred MacMurray (less effectively) is the fly-by-night insurance salesman who hopes to relieve her of all three. Wilder trades Cain’s sun-rot imagery for conventional film noir stylings, but the atmosphere of sexual entrapment survives. With Edward G. Robinson. **—DAVE KEHR 107 min. Tue 5/14, 7 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films**

RR Dragnet Girl

This silent gangster picture by Yasujiro Ozu (1933), about a typist determined to make her criminal boyfriend go straight, is one of the most striking of Ozu’s American-style silents. It stars the great Kinuyo Tanaka, who later played the title role in Mizoguchi’s *The Life of Oharu* and subsequently became a director herself (the first Japanese woman to do so). In Japanese with subtitles. **—JONATHAN ROSENBAUM 100 min. 35mm. Coupler performs a live electronic score. Wed 5/15, 7 PM. Music Box**

Eureka

Shinji Aoyama’s 218-minute wide-screen film (2000) offers a moving reflection on the devastating effects of senseless violence and the fragmented life of contemporary Japan. The inexplicable hijacking of a city bus ends with six dead and only three survivors—a brother and sister in middle school and their bus driver (powerfully played by Koji Yakusho). The bus driver moves in with the children, and they cruise around the island of Kyushu trying to recover from the trauma, accompanied by the children’s lively cousin. The characters’ wanderings take place against a landscape of utility poles and parking lots, volcano craters and scattered buildings, and the compositions and camera movement are both precise and elegant. There are also some impressive long takes, including one near the end, a stunning essay in shifting perspectives, that reveals the identity of a serial killer. Aoyama says he was influenced by *The Searchers* as well as two hypnotic pop albums, Sonic Youth’s *Daydream Nation* and Jim O’Rourke’s *Eureka*. In Japanese with subtitles. **—FRED CAMPER 218 min. 35mm. Sun 5/12, 6 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films**

Everybody Knows

Perhaps the most internationally recognized Iranian filmmaker presently working, Asghar Farhadi has now made two movies in countries other than Iran, *The Past* (2013)

and *Everybody Knows* (2018). The first of these was shot in France but focused on an Iranian character; the protagonist, somewhat alienated from French customs despite being married to a Frenchwoman, poignantly reflected Farhadi’s own emotional distance from the setting. The more recent film, shot in Spain, contains no Iranian characters—or, for that matter, any character who might be perceived as an outsider. Farhadi has decided to look at people who could conceivably exist anywhere, and unfortunately this ends up working to the movie’s detriment. The film’s observations don’t feel universal, but simply generic. **—BEN SACHS R, 133 min. Fri 5/10, 2 PM; Sat 5/11, 5:45 PM; Sun 5/12, 3 PM; Mon 5/13, 6 PM; Tue 5/14, 8 PM; Wed 5/15, 6 PM; and Thu 5/16, 8 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center**

RR Gentlemen Prefer Blondes

Howard Hawks’s grand, brassy 1953 musical about two girls from Little Rock—Marilyn Monroe and Jane Russell—gone gold digging in Paris. The male sex is represented by a bespectacled nerd (Tommy Noonan), a dirty old man (Charles Coburn), and a 12-year-old voyeur (the unforgettable George “Foghorn” Winslow), all of whom deserve what they get. The opening shot—Russell and Monroe in sequins standing against a screaming red drape—is enough to knock you out of your seat, and the audacity barely lets up from there, as Russell romances the entire U.S. Olympic tennis team to the tune of “Ain’t There Anyone Here for Love?” and Hawks keeps topping perversity with perversity. A landmark encounter in the battle of the sexes. **—DAVE KEHR 91 min. Tue 5/14–Thu 5/16, 10:30 PM. Logan**

RR Germany Pale Mother

Reliable sources maintain that this 1980 film by Helma Sanders-Brahms was one of the finest to emerge from the new German cinema of that period. Eva Mattes stars as a young woman left alone with her daughter when her husband is called to the front in 1939; in order to survive the mounting devastation, she must make her way across the war-torn country, and by the time she’s reunited with her husband she’s outgrown him. In German with subtitles. **—DAVE KEHR 123 min. The 149-minute director’s cut is screening. Tue 5/14, 7 PM. Music Box**

N Grain

The influence of Andrei Tarkovsky’s *Stalker* (1979) looms large over this English-language sci-fi drama from Turkey, which achieves passages of genuine visual beauty in spite of its derivativeness. Set in a dystopian future, it centers on a biologist (Jean-Marc Barr) who’s developing synthetic grains to help remedy a global food shortage. He believes another scientist who’s gone missing can provide crucial information for the project, and so the hero sets off for the wilderness to find him. (As in *Stalker*, the character must first break out of a tightly guarded, decaying urban environment before he can trek through an equally grim natural one.) Writer-director Semih Kaplanoğlu presents the scientist’s journey with lots of slow, extended camera movements that show him traversing visually striking landscapes and which generate a certain meditative fascination. This lacks Tarkovsky’s mystical vision and serious ruminations on faith, though what it suggests about the dire state of the planet is certainly potent. **—BEN SACHS 128 min. Sun 5/12, 5 PM and Tue 5/14, 8 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center**

RR He Ran All the Way

Shortly before he was driven into exile by the Hollywood blacklist, the talented and neglected John Berry made this 1951 film, the last of John Garfield, ➤

➡ who died of a heart attack at 39 (many believe in part because of pressures related to his own blacklisting). It's a fitting and powerful testament to the actor's poignancy and power as a working-class punk. Here he plays a hoodlum fleeing a bungled robbery, falling for a young woman (Shelley Winters), and desperately holding her family hostage while oscillating wildly between mistrust and a desire to be part of this family circle. Enhanced by an effective script (Guy Endore and Hugh Butler adapted a Sam Ross novel), superb cinematography by James Wong Howe, and a keen sense of working-class manners, this is a highly affecting thriller that draws us relentlessly into its plangent moral tensions; with Wallace Ford, Selenia Royale, Gladys George, and Norman Lloyd. **—JONATHAN ROSENBAUM** *77 min. 35mm. Wed 5/15, 7:30 PM. Northeastern Illinois University*

RR Ishtar

Treated as a debacle upon release, partially as payback for producer-star Warren Beatty's high-handed treatment of the press, this Elaine May comedy was the most underappreciated commercial movie of 1987. It isn't quite as good as May's previous features, but it's still a very funny work by one of this country's greatest comic talents. Beatty and Dustin Hoffman, both cast against type, play inept songwriters who score a club date in North Africa and accidentally get caught up in various international intrigues. Misleadingly pegged as an imitation *Road to Morocco*, the film is better read as a light comic variation on May's masterpiece *Mikey and Nicky* as well as a prescient send-up of blundering American idiocy in the Middle East. Among the highlights: Charles Grodin's impersonation of a CIA operative, a blind camel, Isabelle Adjani, Jack Weston, Vittorio Storaro's cinematography, and a delightful series of deliberately awful songs, most of them by Paul Williams. **—JONATHAN ROSENBAUM** *107 min. Northwestern University Block Museum of Art* [FREE](#)

RR N Long Day's Journey Into Night

Gorgeously designed and formally audacious, Bi Gan's second feature (after *Kaili Blues*) is constructed around an hour-long tracking shot originally filmed in 3-D. This sequence, which occurs in the second half of the movie, takes viewers on quite a ride, both literally and metaphorically, as Bi moves the camera freely through space and presents clever ways to translate the language of dreams into cinema. (As dream-narrative films go, it's as distinctive an achievement as *The Blood of a Poet*, *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, or *Eyes Wide Shut*.) Before that, though, this is basically a mood piece; the scant plot concerns a detective (Huang Jue) searching for a missing woman whom he hasn't seen in years. Bi creates a strong atmosphere out of familiar detective-movie and melodramatic elements, thanks largely to the inventive camerawork and charismatic performances (the cast also features Tang Wei and Sylvia Chang). My colleague Scout Tafoya has likened this to a Disney theme park attraction based on the films of Wong Kar-wai, and I'm inclined to agree. In Mandarin with subtitles. **—BEN SACHS** *140 min. At River East 21. Visit amctheaters.com for showtimes.*

Mamma Mia!

All singing! All dancing! All squealing! The money-minting Broadway musical has been adapted into 2008's most aggressive chick flick, with a score of irresistibly catchy ABBA tunes sweetening the dumb story like peaches in cottage cheese. Bride-to-be Amanda Sey-

fried (of the HBO series *Big Love*), who's never met her father, discovers three likely candidates (Pierce Brosnan, Colin Firth, Stellan Skarsgard) in the pages of her mother's purloined diary and invites them all to her Greek island home, much to the consternation of mom (a badly overtaxed Meryl Streep). Aside from the music, the movie's sole pleasure is Christine Baranski as Streep's brassy pal; tall, leggy, and self-assured, she turns her one solo number, "Does Your Mother Know," into an unexpected showstopper. Phyllida Lloyd, who mounted the Broadway and London productions, directed. **—J.R. JONES** *PG-13, 108 min. Screens as part of a Mother's Day program, with audience participation. Sun 5/12, 2 PM. Music Box*

N Meeting Gorbachev

German director and intellectual provocateur Werner Herzog finds someone smarter in the room than he is with this laudatory profile of retired head of state Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, who from 1985 to 1992, first as general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and then as the U.S.S.R.'s president, ushered Russia and Europe's satellite socialist republics through *perestroika*, reforms so seismic they altered the map of almost 15 percent of the global landmass. When Gorbachev came to power Russia was fraying, its industries in disrepair and its economy flailing; with widespread suffering and shortages, rapid fundamental change was urgently needed, especially after the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear plant disaster that revealed a previously hidden level of systemic incompetence. Gorbachev chose the path of openness, or *glasnost*, first by visiting Soviet Hungary to learn from its economic model of surplus. He also improved relationships with western European leaders; explored the possibilities of democratization; and reduced Cold War tensions at the Reykjavik Summit on nuclear disarmament with U.S. President Ronald Reagan. Toward the end of Gorbachev's tenure, while the still-committed socialist was vacationing in the Crimea, the Soviet empire was dissolved in a coup d'état; although the demise of the Iron Curtain was widely celebrated, the doors of the Kremlin were now open to self-serving bureaucrats and oligarchs. If his documentary approaches hagiography, Herzog can be forgiven for his hero worship of the statesman so instrumental in the reunification of Germany, a politician who was born to rural peasants and never forgot that the people come first. Andre Singer codirected; with Lech Walesa and former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz. In English and subtitled Russian, German, and Polish. **—ANDREA GRONVALL** *90 min. Herzog attends the 5/10, 7 PM screening for a Q&A (sold out) and the 5/10, 9:40 screening (introduction only). At Music Box Theatre. Visit musicboxtheatre.com for showtimes.*

RR N Penguin Highway

In this irresistible Japanese anime, a solemn fourth-grade science whiz with an intense curiosity about the world in general—and his busy dental hygienist in particular—is thrown together with her over the summer when large flocks of cute penguins suddenly invade his quiet inland town. The mystery of their appearance deepens when he learns it's she who's summoning them, although she can't explain how. Making his feature debut, 30-year-old director Hiroyasu Ishida confidently adapts Tomihiko Morimi's bestselling coming-of-age novel, gracefully segueing from the hero's prepubescent urges to reflections on nature and impermanence, and illustrating brief digressions on the space-time continuum and Einstein's general theory of

relativity with panache. It's a heady brew, gorgeous to behold, and wise about children and the places in their hearts. In Japanese with subtitles. **—ANDREA GRONVALL** *118 min. In Japanese with subtitles: Sat 5/11, 9 PM and Mon 5/13, 7 PM; English-dubbed: Sun 5/19, 4:30 PM. Music Box*

RR Purple Butterfly

Dark and challenging, this 2003 suspense film from Chinese director Lou Ye (*Suzhou River*) unfolds against the Sino-Japanese tensions of the 1920s and '30s. The story of romance and espionage recalls Hitchcock's wartime thrillers; the violent, chaotic set pieces, with their kinetic handheld camera and rapid cutting, evoke contemporary news coverage of terrorist crises. Zhang Ziyi (*House of Flying Daggers*) stars as a young woman in Manchuria whose romance with a visiting Japanese student (Toru Nakamura) is interrupted when he returns home and her brother, a political journalist, is killed by a Japanese assassin. Radicalized, she joins an anti-Japanese resistance group, and years later, when her old flame arrives in Shanghai as an intelligence agent for the Japanese government, she's ordered to get close to him again. A subplot in which another young couple is swept into the violence only adds to the puzzle box of deadly vendettas, until Ye concludes with a daring flashback that seals the heroine's fate. In Mandarin, Japanese, and Vietnamese with subtitles. **—J.R. JONES** *R, 127 min. 35mm. Thu 5/16, 7 PM. Univ. of Chicago Doc Films*

This Is Spinal Tap

Rob Reiner's 1984 satire on rock documentaries has the deadly verisimilitude of a *Harvard Lampoon* magazine parody: every cliché is in place, from the grainy kine-scopes of Spinal Tap's Mersey Beat beginnings to the rambling, rapid between-tunes interviews. The material is consistently clever and funny, though ultimately the attitudes are too narrow to nourish a feature-length film. Though Reiner has wisely introduced the elements of a plot toward the end (the breakup of the band as engineered by the lead singer's calculating girlfriend), 82 minutes is still a long haul for a film defined only by derisiveness. The cast is largely composed of Reiner's sitcom buddies, each reveling in the opportunity to be hip: Michael McKean, Harry Shearer, Christopher Guest, Howard Hesseman, Paul Shaffer, Fred Willard. **—DAVE KEHR** *R, 82 min. Fri 5/10-Mon 5/13, 11 PM. Logan*

RR What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?

Grand Guignol runs head-on into 40s film noir and the result is this chilling, hysterical 1962 movie by the master of the bleak (black) vision, Robert Aldrich (*The Dirty Dozen*, *Ulzana's Raid*, *Emperor of the North*, *Kiss Me Deadly*). Bette Davis, garish and loony, is a former child star who passes the time torturing her crippled sister Joan Crawford. Aldrich's direction and dynamite performances from the two old troupers make this film an experience. **—DON DRUKER** *132 min. 35mm. Sat 5/11-Sun 5/12, 11:30 AM. Music Box*

ALSO PLAYING

Blowin' Up

Stephanie Wang-Breal directed this documentary about the Queens Human Trafficking Intervention Court in New York City. *98 min. Thu 5/16, 8 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

N The Hustle

Two women (Anne Hathaway and Rebel Wilson) plan revenge on the men who have wronged them in this gender-flipped remake of *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*. Chris Addison directed. *PG-13, 94 min. ArcLight, Century 12 and CineArts 6, City North 14, Ford City, Galewood Crossings, Lake Theatre, River East 21, Showplace ICON, Webster Place 11*

May Shorts

Short works on lesbian themes, screening as part of the "Dyke Delicious" series. *Sat 5/11, 7 PM. Chicago Filmmakers*

N Pokémon Detective Pikachu

A live-action/animated film based on the video game and cartoon franchise about a Pikachu who wants to be a detective. With Justice Smith, Kathryn Newton, Suki Waterhouse, Omar Chaparro, Chris Geere, Ken Watanabe and voice work by Ryan Reynolds. Rob Letterman directed. *PG, 104 min. Block 37, ArcLight, Century 12 and CineArts 6, Chatham 14, City North 14, Ford City, Galewood Crossings, Harper Theater, River East 21, Showplace ICON, 600 N. Michigan, Webster Place 11*

N Poms

Diane Keaton, Jacki Weaver, Pam Grier, and Rhea Perlman star in this comedy about retirement home residents who form a cheerleading squad. Zara Hayes directed. *PG-13, Block 37, ArcLight, Century 12 and CineArts 6, Ford City, Galewood Crossings, Showplace ICON, Webster Place 11*

Roll Red Roll

Nancy Schwartzman directed this documentary about the 2012 rape case involving high school students in Steubenville, Ohio. *80 min. Fri 5/10, 7 and 9 PM; Sat 5/11, 1 and 3 PM; Sun 5/12, 1, 3, 5, and 7 PM; Mon 5/13-Thu 5/16, 7 and 9 PM. Facets Cinematheque*

Some Films: Portraits of the Artist

A program of two music documentaries: Thomas Reichman's *Mingus in Greenwich Village* (1968, 58 min.) and Peter Liechti's *Kick That Habit* (1989, 45 min.). *103 min. Introduced by series curator Adam Sonderberg, Sat 5/11, 7 PM. Filmfront*

Still Human

Oliver Chan directed this Hong Kong comedy-drama about a disabled construction worker and his Filipina caregiver. In English and subtitled Cantonese. *115 min. Chan and actor Crisel Consunji attend the screening. Mon 5/13, 8 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center*

N Tolkien

Dome Karukoski directed this biopic about the boyhood and young adult years of famed fantasy author J.R.R. Tolkien. With Nicholas Hoult, Lily Collins, Colm Meaney, and Derek Jacobi. *PG-13, 112 min. ArcLight, Galewood Crossings, Showplace ICON, Webster Place 11*

Urban Rez

Larry T. Pourier directed this 2013 documentary about the Urban Relocation Program, which encouraged native peoples to relocate to cities across the country in the 1950s-70s. *57 min. Showing with two shorter documentaries. Sat 5/11, 1 PM. Newberry Library* [FREE](#) [R](#)



West Side Story TODD ROSENBERG

REVIEW

A time and place for us

Ripped from the headlines of 1957, *West Side Story* still has plenty to say about 2019.

By DEANNA ISAACS

Sometime in the 1940s, it occurred to choreographer Jerome Robbins that an updated musical version of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* could be a good idea. He pitched it to composer Leonard Bernstein and librettist Arthur Laurents, and when they actually got to work on it, in the mid-1950s, Laurents brought in a 25-year-old with a talent for lyrics, Stephen Sondheim.

And so the stars were aligned for the creation of *West Side Story*, which opened on Broadway in 1957 in a production directed by Robbins and is now playing in a faithful, all-too-relevant revival, directed by Francesca Zambello at Lyric Opera as this season's spring musical.

The story is set in mid-20th century Manhattan, but it could be taking place on the streets of Chicago today. Initially conceived by Robbins as an "East Side Story," with Jewish and Catholic protagonists, it became the tale of Maria, a Puerto Rican girl, and Tony, a Polish-American boy. They fall in love at first sight in spite of the animosity between their communities, which plays out as a gang war between the Puerto Rican Sharks and the

"American" Jets, offspring of a not-that-much-earlier wave of immigration from Europe.

West Side Story was groundbreaking in 1957, in part because it put dance at the center of its storytelling and had operatic elements (including a tragic ending), but also for the issues it addressed: immigration, discrimination, evolving gender roles, urban neighborhoods

RR WEST SIDE STORY
Through 6/2: Wed 1:30 and 7 PM, Thu-Fri 7 PM, Sat 1:30 and 7 PM, Sun 1:30 PM; also Thu 5/16, 1:30 PM; no performances Tue 5/6-Thu 5/9, Wed 5/15, 7 PM, or Fri 5/31; Lyric Opera, 20 N. Wacker, 312-827-5600, lyricopera.org, \$29-\$219.

in transition, disenfranchised youth, corrupt policing, violence on the streets, and senseless killing. It was ripped from the headlines of its day, but now—even allowing for 21st-century scruples about stereotyping and appropriation—feels like it could have come from ours. It was, as they say, woke before woke was a thing.

The current Lyric coproduction with Houston Grand Opera and the Glimmerglass Festival retains Robbins's original choreography, reproduced by Julio Monge. It opens with the now-iconic whistle and finger-snapping prelude that introduces the two gangs as they chase and confront each other on a gritty city street—a foretaste of the explosive combat choreography that's one of the show's principal glories. The gangs are led by Bernardo, Maria's older brother (elegantly played by Manuel Stark Santos), and Riff (Brett Thiele), Tony's best friend. It's Riff who explains the virtues of gang life ("From your first cigarette/To your last dyin' day") in an opening earworm of a song, and then convinces former chief Jet Tony (Corey Cott) to join the gang at a dance that evening. Tony, already sensing that "Something's Coming," meets Maria at the dance, setting the wheels in motion for the rumble that'll end with the deaths of both gang leaders. It's a poetically compressed plot (timeline: two days), richly expanded by the diverse music of its composer/lyricist dream team, from the brilliant satire of "Gee, Officer Krupke" to the sublime duet, "A Boy Like That/I Have a Love," sung by Maria and Anita, Bernardo's girlfriend. Which brings us to two compelling performances.

West Side Story's creators intended it to be an ensemble work rather than a star showcase. They cast it with a group of young, mostly unknown performers. But ever since its first run, when she was played, indelibly, by Chita Rivera (Rita Moreno had the role in the film), it's been Anita's show. (Sondheim's unforgettable lyrics for her big number, "America," don't hurt.) Amanda Castro, who plays Anita in this production, is a great dancer, with the singing and acting chops the part demands. She does it full justice.

But there's a surprise here: this show belongs to Maria. Mikaela Bennett, cast as the sweet but usually less-than-dynamic ingenue, is a major emerging talent with a soprano voice so extraordinary, it dominates the production. If that's a flaw, it's an elevating one.

The popularity of the Bernstein/Sondheim score, with stand-alone hits like "Maria," "Tonight," and "Somewhere," along with the classic 1961 film, have made *West Side Story* so familiar, performances can take on a ritual aspect. But a chance to see it in a production at this operatic scale, with a 40-piece orchestra (conducted by James Lowe) is rare.

@Deannaisaacs

REVIEW

Freedom riders

Too Heavy for Your Pocket weighs the cost of making a difference.

By JOSH FLANDERS

Eminently engaging and candid, *Too Heavy for Your Pocket*, now at TimeLine and directed by Ron OJ Parson, is an intimate look at two working-class African American couples living on the fringes of the civil rights movement in Tennessee. Full of joy and humor, singing and crying, this multifaceted story opens in 1961 as Sally Mae (Jennifer Latimore) is about to graduate from college. Her husband, Tony (Cage Sebastian Pierre), and best friends Bowzie (Jalen Gilbert) and Evelyn (Ayanna Bria Bakari) have come to share the celebration.

Bowzie has his own good news. He has a scholarship to Fisk University and is now faced with the anxiety of setting aside his country-boy ways and venturing to an unfamiliar place populated with the "kids of lawyers." While at school, Bowzie decides to join

RR TOO HEAVY FOR YOUR POCKET
Through 6/29: Wed-Thu 7:30 PM, Fri 8 PM, Sat 4 and 8 PM, Sun 2 PM; also Tue 6/25, 7:30 PM, TimeLine Theatre, 615 W. Wellington, 773-281-8463, timelinetheatre.com, \$40-\$54.

the Freedom Riders and fight racism in the deep south, hoping—for once—to make a difference. But his decision to abandon his wife and their friends sends shockwaves through all their lives, especially since they are the ones left to deal with the consequences.

Emerging playwright Jiréh Breon Holder has woven a compelling story with flawed characters, each of whom bears the weight of the impact of Bowzie's actions in his or her own way. However, it is the exceedingly powerful acting and directing that elevate this production. Bakari delivers a stellar performance, embodying a woman in turmoil; she shines in several songs, including one about a bird ➔

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THEATER



Too Heavy For Your Pocket KENNY NAKAI, NAKAI PHOTOGRAPHY

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with a broken wing, a clear metaphor. Latimore is outstanding and funny as the steadfast wife and friend whose sacrifices and ability to hold families together go unnoticed until she cries, “I want a Freedom Ride for me!” Gilbert exemplifies Bowzie’s rollercoaster of moods: singing and joking, yet still revealing internal struggles with explosions of frustration.

Parson balances the ebb and flow of harmony and conflict of the first half, while mitigating the main flaw in the second half, where some conversations happen through phone calls and letters. His direction emphasizes the simplicity of the story, using the elements of air and water to build a foundation for the production. Deep breaths bookend the play and water plays a central role in both quenching thirst and baptizing a character who emerges anew.

Too Heavy dips its toe into issues of racism and civil rights, but it swims more deeply in everyday issues of marital fidelity, sacrifice, responsibility to friends and family, and fulfillment of one’s own dreams. It’s delightful to see a play that is at once simple and yet produces such profound change for all its characters. With an engaging, interactive lobby display about the Freedom Riders and civil rights movement, TimeLine reminds us that there is always a battle to achieve freedom—and how important that still is 60 years later. **F**

THEATER

RR Toxic glitter

The Children vividly imagines the worst-case scenario after an environmental disaster.

It’s comforting to regard the premise of Lucy Kirkwood’s eco-thriller with a smug sense of that-would-never-actually-happen. Humans would never be so stupid as to build a nuclear reactor in a flood zone, right? And even if they did, they surely wouldn’t put the backup generators in the basement. Except that’s basically the setup that led to disaster in Fukushima, Japan, in 2011.

In *The Children*, married nuclear scientists Hazel (Janet Ulrich Brooks) and Robin (Yasen Peyankov) are living in the wake of a Fukushima-like disaster. The power station where they once worked alongside Rose (Ora Jones) has remained a threat long after the earthquake and tsunami that Hazel describes with suffocating intensity. Kirkwood doesn’t detail what will happen if the station’s disabled reactors leak into the ocean. She doesn’t have to. The implications are clear and terrifying, a threat that hangs in the air like the “toxic glitter” Hazel says she could almost see when she visited the radiated, flooded ruins of the home she and Robin shared before the disaster.

In director Jonathan Berry’s taut, incisive staging, the inevitability of a worst-case endgame pervades the atmosphere. But it’s the offstage children—both Hazel and Robin’s and those of the world entire—who have the most to fear. Kirkwood’s needle-sharp dialogue asks what is owed these children and, implicitly, what will become of them if (when) the oceans turn toxic. She offers no solutions, just a picture of a devastated world that’s nightmarishly recognizable, culminating in a final, all-engulfing image that will take your breath away. —CATEY SULLIVAN **THE CHILDREN** Through 6/9: Wed 2 and 7:30 PM, Thu-Fri 7:30 PM, Sat 3 and 7:30 PM, Sun 3 PM, Tue 7:30 PM; also Sun 5/12, 7:30 PM; no performances Wed 5/8, 2 PM, or Sat

@joshua_flanders

THEATER



Parched JOEL MAISONET

5/11, Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted, 312-335-1650, steppenwolf.org, \$20-\$104.

A font of imagination

Helvetica asks how seriously we should take an artist who never learned to be a human being.

A young adult novelist puzzles through fame, nostalgia, and the tedium of the everyday in Chicago playwright Will Coleman's crisp show for Death & Pretzels Theater. Helvetica Burke has been making up stories since she was little. Now that she's a professional author of fairy tale-like stories, her interactions with jaded grown-ups like her husband, who think of the imagination as a means of coping with life's ordinary dull tasks, become strained. As someone who never had to get rid of her fantasies, Helvetica has no way to confront bristly realities like death or domestic squabbling except by doing what she's always done: retreat to the better world of fantasy, and return to the boring round of existence with something more magical in her back pocket. Coleman's play follows Helvetica across a long trajectory of self-fashioning and self-deceit, asking how seriously a person's success in their art can be taken if they never learn how to be a human being.

Three actors play Helvetica at different life stages, with the bulk of scenes going to the superb Brianna Joy Ford as the writer in adolescence. Ford's scenes with Nick Strauss, who plays Helvetica's dad, are among the show's most moving. Unlike Helvetica, Strauss's character doesn't get to dismiss responsibility. He has the impossible task of explaining the world to someone who barely believes she has to live in it. That earnest clash deepens the play's uncommonly mature view of childhood. Madison Smith directs. —**MAX MALLER** *HELVETICA* Through 6/1: Thu-Sat 7:30 PM, Nox Arca Theatre, 4001 N. Ravenswood, deathandpretzels.com, \$18.

In search of America, man
In *Mad Hip Beat & Gone*, two teens split
Nebraska and get "tangled up in roads."

Unhelpfully prolific American playwright Steven Dietz never met a promising idea he couldn't muddle. In this 2013 play, which Promethean Theatre Ensemble is now

giving only its second production, he offers up teen buddies Danny (Pat King) and Rich (Michael Vizzi), dawdling about Kimball, Nebraska, in 1949. They're meant to be swept up in the yearning, freewheeling energy of the nascent Beat Generation, personified in Honey (Hilary Williams), a young woman pausing in Kimball on her way westward in search of her dead mother's spirit and the Bop. Strategically, Danny and Rich have also each lost a parent; in Dietz's world of easy signifiers, the mere fact of parental loss is apparently meant to do all the heavy lifting a better playwright might do to dramatize a character's existential anguish.

So when Danny and Rich jump in the car and head west, their journey provides more opportunities for Dietz to wax metaphorical on American culture (we're all "tangled up in roads," whatever that means) than to develop his characters into more than two dimensions. His eagerness to embrace the Beats' penchant for nonlinearity only results in a second act that can't decide what it's about.

It's a shame, because the first act contains some of Dietz's most delicate, elliptical writing that nicely captures the despair prowling just below our midwestern pluck, setting up what should be an epic saga. Director Jess Hutchinson's cast teases out sweet and desperate nuances in these opening scenes, but all that potential is squandered in a journey that goes nowhere. —**JUSTIN HAYFORD** *MAD HIP BEAT & GONE* Through 6/1: Thu-Sat 7:30 PM, Sun 2 PM, Edge Theater, 1133 W. Catalpa, prometheantheatre.org, \$30, \$25 seniors, \$15 students and military.

Miss Trunchbull's on a rampage
Whoever thought *Matilda* was entertainment for children?

Dennis Kelly and Tim Minchin's musical adaptation of Roald Dahl's 1988 novel about a precocious five-year-old (she reads difficult books, understands grown-ups at a deep level, and has telekinetic powers a la Stephen King's Carrie) is a dark, troubling work. Matilda is a profoundly lonely child living in a cruel world and surrounded by addled adults, notably her shallow and materialistic parents and a school headmistress so selfish and sadistic she makes Miss Hannigan from the musical *Annie* seem kind. The show is full of moments of extreme violence

and cruelty: at one point the headmistress picks up one of the children in her school, spins around, and tosses the child like a hapless rag doll hundreds of feet in the air. Yet the show is considered fit for kids.

Kelly's book is awkward and fragmented. It's sometimes hard to tell who the main character is—Matilda is often an observer of events in the story, not central to them—and the style of the show is so inconsistent—careening from loud, cartoonish comic scenes to somber scenes of Dickensian oppression—that it seems always on the verge of falling to pieces.

This Drury Lane production, directed and choreographed by Mitch Sebastian, feels true to the material, which is a cold comfort. The show, though, is packed with superb performances. Audrey Edwards, who shares the lead role with Natalie Galla, is quit winning as the plucky Matilda. She is surrounded by a host of similarly gifted young actors, each a star in her or his own right. And Sean Fortunato does a bravura turn in drag as the above-mentioned headmistress. —**JACK HELBIG** *MATILDA* Through 6/23: Wed 1:30 PM, Thu 1:30 and 8 PM, Fri 8 PM, Sat 3 and 8 PM, Sun 2 and 6 PM; also Tue 5/21, 1:30 PM, Drury Lane Theatre, 100 Drury Ln., Oakbrook Terrace, 630-530-0111, drurylanetheatre.com, \$55-\$70, \$50 seniors (matinees only).

RR More than a thirst trap
We can all learn a lot about water politics from the young artists who created *Parched*.

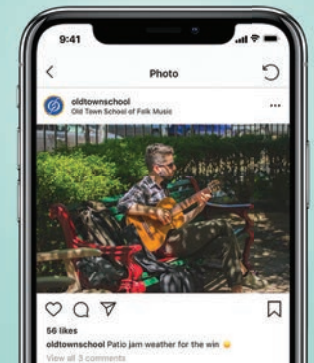
According to the Pew Research Center, Gen Z—young people currently aged 14-22—are even more liberal and politically engaged than their predecessors, the millennials. With Free Street Theater's *Parched* (*Stories About Water, Pollution & Theft*), Chicago gets a sip of this generation's activism and a grassrootsy dramatization of water politics.

Devised over the course of ten months by Free Street's youth ensemble, students aged 14-19, *Parched* is driven by vignettes drawn from interviews with researchers, activists, and community members. In that respect, it's a combo of journalism and performance, resulting in passionate storytelling that feels informed and brave. Too young to vote and with little opportunity to steer major legislation that will impact the rest of their lives, the young actors all seem to understand that art is their best currency. The pieces are formed by facts, but they are bound by the emotional realities of being teenagers out to stop the end of the world.

But the show never forgets the importance of play. While nerves occasionally get the best of individual performers, collectively the ensemble is confident and thirsty for both joy and justice (there's one particular "thirst trap" joke that lands beautifully). Under the direction of Katrina Dion, the students also show a grasp of theatrical form, employing narrative, movement, and text throughout.

Ultimately, the play's ambiguous forms, unhemmed edges, and calls to action seem directly inspired by El Teatro Campesino, the Chicano activist-artist theater company forged by Luis Valdez in the late 60s. Consider *Parched* a moment of activation—not just of a set, but of a new political generation. —**KT HAWBAKER** *PARCHED (STORIES ABOUT WATER, POLLUTION & THEFT)* Through 5/18: Fri 8 PM, Sat 2 PM; also Thu 5/16, 7 PM, Free Street Theater, 1419 W. Blackhawk, 773-772-7248, freestreet.org, pay what you can. **RI**

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Artists performing at the first Demolición in October 2016, from upper left: Divino Niño guitarist Camilo Medina, singer-songwriter Mia Joy, and Bruised guitarist Vertin Alejandro
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Demolición makes room in the north-side scene for Latinx rock

Chicago label Dumpster Tapes books this daylong festival because segregation won't undo itself.

By LEOR GALIL

In 2010, Camilo Medina and Javier Forero, natives of Colombia who grew up in Miami, moved to Chicago to attend the School of the Art Institute. They settled in Lakeview and tried to immerse themselves in the neighborhood's music scene, but they had a hard time finding other aspiring musicians on the same wavelength—people with an interest in 50s and 60s pop, ideally who also spoke Spanish. They did manage to connect with another SAIC student, Guillermo Rodriguez, and in 2013 they started the band that would eventually become Divino Niño, with Rodriguez on guitar, Forero on bass and vocals, and Medina on guitar and vocals.

As Divino Niño took shape (they eventually added drummer Pierce Codina), their orbit remained narrow. They could've found like-minded folks in the punk, garage, and crusty psych bands that frequented Logan Square's DIY spaces and bars, but they didn't spend any time there. Because the scene Medina had gotten familiar with in Miami had been relatively small—every young musician seemed to know every other young musician—he assumed that after more than five years in Chicago, he'd seen all the city had to offer. "I thought I knew all the bands," he says. "Me and Javier were talking about moving to LA, because I just wasn't really connecting with

the bands here and I thought that the scene in Chicago wasn't that great."

In spring 2016, the scene that Divino Niño had failed to find came to them instead. The band got a Facebook message from Alex Fryer, co-owner of Chicago DIY rock label Dumpster Tapes. Fryer was organizing an in-store performance for Argentinean surf-rock group Las Piñas at Avondale's Bric-a-Brac Records, and she wanted Divino Niño to open. "As soon as I started connecting with Alex, I started going to shows in Logan Square, at Cole's, the Empty Bottle," Medina says. "I started discovering people my age—the same things I thought were cool, they thought it was cool too."

By May 2016, Divino Niño had already released two album-length collections of demos. They wanted their easygoing, throwback rock to sound pristine and effortless, though, and they were constantly frustrated with their recordings. They scrapped three different versions of their first proper full-length, *Foam*, before settling on the one that drops next month via Winspear (original home of hot Long Island indie-rock commodities Lemon Twigs). The band started making progress toward the sound they wanted after connecting with Dumpster Tapes. "We started building the community," Medina says. "And that has been essential for us finishing our record and sharpening the vision of what we want to do artistically."

With its lush weave of dream pop, yacht rock, and Laurel Canyon folk, *Foam* is one of the year's most accomplished local rock releases so far. Divino Niño pulled it off with assistance from friends they made after connecting with Fryer: scene utility player Justin Vittori (Grapetooth, Knox Fortune) added percussion to a few songs and Wurlitzer to another, and pop wonder Paul Cherry helped produce one track.

Earlier this month Divino Niño played Thalia Hall with Brooklyn indie-pop group Crumb, and they've booked a release party for *Foam* at the Empty Bottle for June 21. Between those two, on Saturday, May 11, Dumpster Tapes hosts Demolición, its mostly annual

DUMPSTER TAPES PRESENTS DEMOLICIÓN 2019

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 Sat 5/11, noon-5 PM, Auxiliary Art Center, 3012 W. Belmont, \$10, 21+

DIVINO NIÑO, BUNNY, GIRL K, VALEBOL, DJ PAULCHERRY69
 Fri 6/21, 9 PM, Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, \$12, 21+

festival celebrating local Latinx-fronted acts. In October 2016, Divino Niño played the first Demolición, just a few months after their first Dumpster Tapes show. They tried to work around their other commitments to play this one—Medina offered to do a solo set, but ultimately he couldn't make it happen (it turns out he'll be in Miami during the daylong mini-fest). "I just wanted to be part of it, ➔

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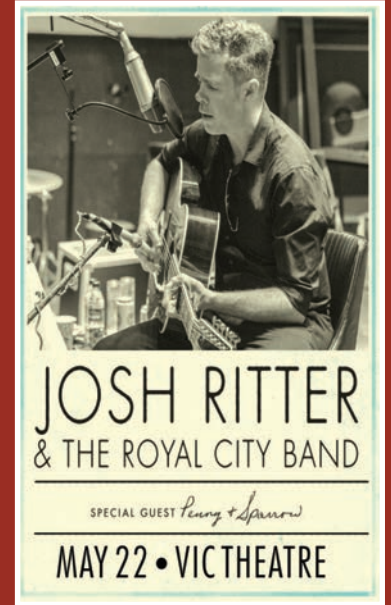


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because I think the Latin community longs for representation,” he says. “They want to see people who speak Spanish—they want to see a person that looks like them, that has similar roots to them, doing something artistic. And that’s very important.”

Representation is a big part of what Fryer and Dumpster Tapes cofounder Ed McMena-min want to accomplish with Demolición. Fryer in particular is concerned that most of the spaces that host the label’s shows aren’t congenial to Latinx audiences. “It was a personal project for me, as a Chicana, as a brown woman,” she says, “to create this space for other artists, other performers, and people that looked like me that maybe didn’t feel as welcome just walking into wherever we nor-mally held our shows.”

On the bill with Divino Niño at the first Demolición were postpunks Bruised, feminist punks Cabrona, bilingual rockers Rai, and dream-pop singer-songwriter Mia Joy. Joy had put a band together earlier in 2016, and Demolición was one of their first perfor-man-ces. She remembers getting nervous about playing such a big show, but sharing the stage with other Latinx musicians meant she didn’t feel like she had to prove to a bunch of white dudes that she deserved to be there.

“I was so used to the music scene being pre-dominantly, like, white hetero males playing garage rock,” Joy says. But Demolición was different: “I remember not feeling very judged. There was this common thread of being Latinx, but also there was different genres.” The festival helped Joy feel more grounded in the local scene, and she believes that such events play a critical role in encouraging young Latinx musicians to get involved. “We have to have shows like that, where we’re taking up predominantly all of the space,” she says. “Because unfortunately we’re either left to open or we’re lucky enough to share gigs with mostly white musicians.”

When it came time to book this year’s

Demolición, Fryer reached out to alumni for lineup recommendations. “I had so many names for her, which is really awesome, be-cause I don’t think I would have had names three or four years ago,” Joy says. The third Demolición (it skipped 2018) features indie rockers Pkng, tender folkies Tenci, prog punks Perro Feo, power-pop mavens Town Criers, and indie-pop darlings Girl K.

Pkng guitarist and singer Elmer Martinez moved to Chicago from northern California in 2016, and he got acclimated to the local scene in part by attending Demolición—it was one of his first local concerts. He was on assignment for *Hooligan* magazine, working on his first piece for the Chicago-based outlet. “I truly felt like I was at an intimate gathering with *mis primos*,” he wrote in his review. “And I am eternally grateful to the people at Dumpster Tapes and all of the performers for creating such a special experience.”

Martinez has been especially influenced by meeting Fryer. “I just love her work ethic,” he says. “Dumpster Tapes, they’re always doing stuff, like showcases, shows, and different re-leases—that’s definitely an inspiration. I want to be in those leagues, so that kicked my butt into gear, musically.”

McMenamin and Fryer met at a Cobra Lounge show in 2013 and launched Dumpster Tapes within months. Fryer, a 27-year-old Chicago native, had gotten involved in the scene in her late teens; she had a DJ shift at WHPK, and she’d recently been an intern for a year at the Empty Bottle. Mc-Menamin, 33, grew up downstate, and before he moved to Chicago in 2011 he’d already start-ed dreaming about getting involved in a big-city music scene. “We both, before meeting, had always wanted to start a label,” he says. “I remember living in Peoria and googling, ‘How do you start a record label,’ but not really having the scene I could build one with—there were some bands I liked in Peoria, but hard to build a label.”



Dumpster Tapes cofounders Ed McMena-min and Alex Fryer  SARAH CROWLEY

The two of them bonded at shows by some of the scene’s promising young garage bands, including Flesh Panthers, Gross Pointe, Son of a Gun, and the Morons. “As Ed and I started going to these shows, we came across a lot of bands that we really loved and grew close with but that didn’t have anything out on a physical format yet,” Fryer says. The label debuted in October 2013 with a split cassette that paired Son of a Gun and Gross Pointe.

“We didn’t have a five-year plan when we started,” McMena-min says. “We had about a one-month plan: ‘Let’s put this thing out on cassette. How do we figure out how to put it on a cassette?’” By 2015 they were putting out new music almost monthly, and that year they released their first vinyl (Flesh Panthers’ *NGC 2632*, in partnership with Tall Pat Records) and the first EP by Cut Worms, aka onetime Chicagoan and national garage-scene darling Max Clarke.

Dumpster Tapes also throws release shows for the local acts on its roster. The label found an early advocate in Logan Square dive Cole’s, but as the neighborhood’s garage and punk

scene has grown and scattered, some of its acts have become too big to play there (or in the DIY spaces that nurtured them). Dumpster Tapes has remained steadfast in its support of the scene, though—it’s become a frequent presence at the Empty Bottle, and in 2017 it began booking monthly shows at the Slippery Slope.

“We tell everybody, if they agree to do a tape with us, they’re part of the family,” Fryer says. “We’ll continue to promote them and support them, whether or not we end up putting something out with them again. Or if the band only makes it a couple of years—it doesn’t matter.” And musicians often reciprocate by staying loyal to Dumpster Tapes. After Cut Worms signed to Jagjaguwar in 2017, their new label enlisted Dumpster Tapes to release a cassette version of the band’s 2018 album, *Hollow Ground*. And when Dumpster Tapes threw a fifth-anniversary party at the Bottle, the headliner it booked was Cafe Racer, whose front man, Michael Santana, had played in Gross Pointe. One of the garage scene’s best bands, Cafe Racer put out their 2016 self-titled

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LINCOLN HALL



SCHUBAS TAVERN



Two of the bands at this year's Demolición: Girl K (above) are Kathy Patino, Alex Pieczynski, Kevin Sheppard, and Ajay Raghuraman. Pkng (below) are Sarah Seguire-Hall, Elmer Martinez, and Alexander Adams.
 @LALY VIVEROS; ELMER MARTINEZ



debut through Dumpster Tapes—and they also played the second Demolición in December 2017, alongside McMenamin's power-pop four-piece, Laverne.

Fryer and McMenamin began batting around ideas for what became Demolición early in 2016. "I was becoming more aware of the festivals that were happening in Pilsen," Fryer says. "The lineup for Ruido Fest was really good that year, and they do a pretty good job of bringing local acts on the bill. I was like, 'Why don't we do something that's got this feel for it on the north side, where we normally have our shows, and where maybe some of these bands don't normally play?'"

White men dominate the north side's underground rock scene, whether they mean to or not, and McMenamin's thinking about Demolición came from the understanding that this state of affairs was likely to perpetuate itself—opportunities for musicians of color wouldn't necessarily arise without lots of people putting in work. "There's always a need to expose different audiences and different bands to each other," he says. "Sometimes that doesn't happen naturally—sometimes you kind of have to make an extra effort to make it happen."

Demolición also motivated Dumpster Tapes to reach out to bands outside its circle. When Bruised opened for Alice Bag at a Chi-Town Futbol show in August 2016, Fryer was in the crowd—and every band on the bill had at least one Latinx member. "I think that was also maybe part of what inspired me," she says. "That was how I heard about Bruised, and I fell in love with them after that."

Because the first Demolición happened about a month before the 2016 presidential election, and Trump had been demonizing Latinx immigrants throughout the campaign, Fryer and McMenamin decided to donate part of the fest's proceeds to a good cause—one they figured would piss him off if he knew about it. "That's also what made it seem like it was important that it happened then," Fryer says. They picked El Rescate, an initiative run by the nonprofit Puerto Rican Cultural Center that provides support for homeless youth, particularly LGBTQ+ youth of color.

Fryer and McMenamin have chosen different beneficiaries for subsequent Demolicións—in 2017 they donated to the Hurricane Maria Community Relief & Recovery Fund, and this year they'll support Vida Libre, a bond fund for refugees and asylum

seekers that's run by binational organization Al Otro Lado. Fryer, who's taking the LSAT this summer, has served as an associate intern for immigration policy at Chicago nonprofit Latino Policy Forum and wants to become a lawyer for refugees and asylees.

Vida Libre's mission resonates with Kathy Patino, front woman of Girl K, a young act with a lot of momentum in the scene. "When Alex mentioned to me that the show functioned as a fund-raiser for the organization Al Otro Lado, I knew that I really had to do my best to be able to play," she says. "I'm first-gen. My parents came from Mexico, and I know a lot of family that struggles with all the current political climate that's going on right now—I've really been wanting to incorporate more activism in my being and Girl K in general, just 'cause I think it's really important to spread good ideals and educate people, no matter what you're pursuing."

Though the past two Demolicións were in the fall, this year it's in the spring because Fryer and McMenamin had their hands full planning Dumpster Tapes' fifth-anniversary party at the Bottle in November. "We had a bunch of shows last fall and winter, including the birthday show—didn't want to overextend everybody," McMenamin says. The pair made a couple other big changes: for the first time, Demolición will happen in the afternoon and include a handful of Latinx vendors. Like all Dumpster Tapes shows, it's cheap, though at \$10 it's one of their more expensive events. "We might've had—in five years—a couple of shows that were more than \$10," McMenamin says. "That's important. I think if your art is not accessible, it's not radical. If everyone can't be there, then it's meaningless to me."

Fryer and McMenamin want Demolición to celebrate and connect Latinx musicians from across the diaspora and help them feel comfortable in Chicago's rock scene. Town Criers singer and guitarist Andre Baptista, who grew up in Brazil, has been roommates with members of Post Animal and Twin Peaks vocalist-guitarist Cadien Lake James. "They started taking me on road trips, showing us how to book shows, put on a good show, how to sound check, and all that kind of stuff," he says.

Baptista has gotten to know some local Latinx musicians too, and the familiarity he feels around them has sharpened his awareness of what makes his experience unique when he's the only Latinx person in the room. "You notice little things that are just different in the way that you were brought up," he says. "It makes sure that you don't forget where you come from." 

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PICK OF THE WEEK

Chicago art-rock jesters Woongi nail the acrobatics on *Rip's Cuts*

WOONGI, LIAM KAZAR, BLUSH SCARS

Mon 5/13, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western. 21+ **FREE**

NATALIE ESCOBEDO

IN AN E-MAIL INTERVIEW with Dominican music site Vents Magazine, Chicago art-rock foursome Woongi claim they wrote their forthcoming second album, *Rip's Cuts* (Sooper), to “sync up” with a 1993 family film called *The Skateboard Kid*. Though I’ve never seen it, I’m more than willing to listen to musicians who say they’re inspired by a flick featuring a magical flying skateboard voiced by Dom DeLuise. Woongi approached *Rip's Cuts* with borderline cartoonish audaciousness, using ever-shifting prismatic synths to set a different tone on each song—and they get particularly experimental on the grandiose but occasionally anxious prog-adjacent number “Tired Fortress.” Woongi also can make succinct, poignant pop when they feel like it; on the single “Fire’s Dead” they capture a beautiful melancholy with the help of glittering melodies reminiscent of fancy-haircut 80s new wave. —LEOR GALIL

THURSDAY9

KAYY DRIZZ Z Soniat, Kona FM, and JS Alvarez opens. 10 PM, Smart Bar, 3730 N. Clark. 21+ **FREE**

Since 2007, New Jersey-born producer Kalayisa Drake, aka Kayy Drizz, has been making Jersey club, an aggressive Garden State cousin of Baltimore club—a raw, fast-paced, jittery dance sound that emerged in the late 80s. And earlier this

decade, her spin on Jersey club earned her a place in the scene’s most storied collective, Brick Bandits, formed in 2002. These days Kayy calls Chicago home, but the spirit of Jersey club still pulses in the herky-jerky vocal loops and hard-stomping percussion on her latest release, December’s *Precious Gems: Cluster 2*. A couple of weeks before she self-released that comp, she promoted a December set at Wicker Park’s Emporium by dropping a Soundcloud mix that energizes selections from pop music’s vast history with Jersey club’s adren-

aline rush. She opens its final section with a nearly two-minute chant of “Fuck Donald Trump,” interjecting “old lyin’ ass” and “old hatin’ ass” (among other variations) as a serrated drum ‘n’ bass loop emerges. Kayy Drizz shows us another way to find joy beneath the anger and frustration of the Trump era—and to use music to amplify a message of hope and empowerment. —LEOR GALIL

FRIDAY10

ARTIFACTS TRIO 8:30 PM, Constellation, 3111 N. Western, \$15. 18+

The Artifacts Trio first convened in 2015 in response to the 50th anniversary of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians. Flutist, vocalist, and electronicist Nicole Mitchell, cellist Tomeka Reid, and drummer Mike Reed have all held leadership roles in the organization; they also have a history more than a decade long of playing in one another’s bands. Originally the group’s repertoire consisted of tunes composed by AACM members, including Leroy Jenkins, Edward Wilkerson Jr., Anthony Braxton, and Fred Anderson. On the trio’s debut CD, 2015’s *Artifacts* (482 Music), their rearrangements distill the pieces to their essential virtues, such as the jubilant demeanor and intricate changes of Roscoe Mitchell’s “Jo Jar” and the insistent, spiritual vibe of Amina Claudine Myers’s “Have Mercy on Us.” The AACM’s golden anniversary festivities are long since over, but the Artifacts Trio have continued to play, and they’ve opened up their book to include their own compositions. They’re currently putting the finishing touches on an upcoming album that will include original material as well as a couple more pieces by Roscoe Mitchell and Muhal Richard Abrams. —BILL MEYER

DEHD *The Hecks and Mavis the Dog open. 9 PM, Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, \$12. 21+*

Chicago trio Dehd are a meeting of the minds between two singer-songwriters: bassist and singer Emily Kempf, who performs as Vail and has been in Lala Lala, and guitarist and singer Jason Balla, who fronts Ne-Hi and Earring. (Eric McGrady plays stand-up drums.) Their most recent slab of wax, an LP that smashes two previously released tapes together on one disc, is hazy, confessional post-punk with a dreamy throb and beautiful vocal interplay. Tonight, Dehd celebrate the release of their first proper full-length, *Water* (Fire Talk), where they step out from the fog of that earlier material. On this excellent collection of bare-bones new-wave punk, plunky guitar and groovy bass sit at the forefront, while the songs reveal more sophisticated melodic sensibilities and vocal arrangements. And though Dehd retain their downed-out Velvets energy, they push forward more than ever before—with *Water*, they prove themselves a world-class indie band, and it’s a real treat to hear them mature and reach new heights. —LUCA CIMARUSTI

SATURDAY11

RADIUS 10 PM, Elastic Arts, 3429 W. Diversey, \$10. **ALL**

Over the past few years, Chicago has steadily grown its beat scene, and producers dedicated to instrumental hip-hop have a few monthly showcases to check out their peers, chief among them the Whistler’s Push Beats and Cafe Mustache’s Open Beats. And late in 2018, the Fresh Roasted series (also usually at the Whistler) held a massive, March Madness-style live beat-making com- ➔



Kayy Drizz @ WHO IS SHE?

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THE SECRET HISTORY OF CHICAGO MUSIC

PIVOTAL CHICAGO MUSICIANS THAT SOMEHOW HAVE NOT GOTTEN THEIR JUST DUES by PLASTIC CRIMEWAVE

the Mentally ill

THE ORIGINAL MEMBERS OF THE MENTALLY ILL WERE BORN IN 1959 OR '60 AND ATTENDED DEERFIELD HIGH: LARRY GUTKIN (SINGER SADO MARQUIS), ROB HERMAN (BASSIST AND SAXOPHONIST SKITZ PHRENIC), RICK SCHLEICHER (GUITARIST HANS DOITHE), AND RICHARD BLATT (DRUMMER SPECIAL ED). THEY LISTENED TO DEEP PURPLE, SABBATH, & LED ZEPPELIN, BUT IN 1977, BEFORE CHICAGO'S PUNK SCENE HAD TAKEN OFF, GUTKIN AND BLATT SAW A WALTER CRONKITE TV REPORT ON UK PUNK—THEY INITIALLY MISTOOK IT FOR MONTY PYTHON-STYLE SATIRE, BUT ONCE THEY STOPPED LAUGHING, THEY GOT INTERESTED. WHILE IN COLLEGE IN BOSTON, GUTKIN SAW THE LIKES OF LA PESTE, THE GIRLS, AND THE REAL KIDS, SOME-TIMES WITH A VISITING BLATT, WHO WENT BACK TO DEERFIELD AND ENLISTED HERMAN TO WRITE 12 SHORT, BLISTERING SONGS. THEY SENT GUTKIN A CASSETTE AND PESTERED HIM INTO ADDING LYRICS. SERIAL KILLER JOHN WAYNE GACY WAS IN THE NEWS (HE'D CONFESSED IN DECEMBER 1978), AND THE IMMORTAL "GACY'S PLACE" APPEARED ON THE BAND'S 3-SONG DEBUT 45, RECORDED AT DEERFIELD'S STARBEAT STUDIOS OVER GUTKIN'S WINTER BREAK. THE MENTALLY ILL WANTED TO BE MORE

OFFENSIVE AND OBNOXIOUS THAN THE SEX PISTOLS, RICHARD HELL, AND THE DEAD BOYS, AND THEY ARGU-ABLY SUCCEEDED—THAT RARE 1979 SINGLE NOW FETCHES \$200 OR MORE. IN 1999 A REUNITED MENTALLY ILL (WITH NEW GUITARIST JON LED WITH, AKA KLAUS TROFODIC) RECORDED THE ALBUM "STRIKE THE BOTTOM RED" WITH SUPERFAN STEVE ALONI, AND IN 2004 ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES COMPILED 20 TRACKS FROM THE BAND'S 3 LATE-'70S RECORDING SESSIONS, TO MAINTAIN A RESIDENTS-LIKE MYSTIQUE. THE MENTALLY ILL HAD NEVER PLAYED LIVE—THEIR FIRST PROPER SHOW WAS IN 2007, AT A RELEASE PARTY FOR THE CHICAGO PUNK DOC "YOU WEREN'T THERE," SINCE THEN THEY'VE TOURED THREE TIMES, AND THEY'RE HITTING THE ROAD AGAIN IN JULY TO PUSH A 40TH ANNIVERSARY RELEASE OF "GACY'S PLACE." THESE DAYS ALL THE MEMBERS HAVE FAMILIES AND STRAIGHT JOBS: GUTKIN RUNS A STARTUP IN THE SPIRITS INDUSTRY, BLATT IS IN REAL ESTATE, HERMAN DOES MEDIA PRODUCTION, AND LED WITH IS AN ENGINEER FOR A HIGH-TECH COMPANY.

—HUGE THANKS TO DANIEL AKA FRANKIE SMITH & LARRY GUTKIN.

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MAY 17	DOG WON'T HUNT
MAY 17	RED WIGGLERS
MAY 18	FEATHERPUSHER
MAY 19	MAGNAPHONIC
MAY 20	CRACKPOT
MAY 20	TONY DO ROSARIO GROUP
MAY 22	RC BIG BAND 7PM
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MUSIC

continued from 32

petition that culminated with a December championship show at Sleeping Village. Producer and ETC Records founder Ramon "Radius" Norwood has helped the community prosper as a participant, promoter, and creative leader. And his new self-released LP, *Embrace the Circle* (his second album in roughly two months), requires you to take part in the scene if you want a copy—Radius says he won't stream it or sell it online, so you've got to come to one of his gigs to buy one. A good time to do so would be his imminent record-release show at Elastic, which features appearances from several of Radius's friends who contributed to the album. Like much of his work, *Embrace the Circle* demonstrates the connections that local hip-hop maintains with local dance music and jazz, and Radius applies knowledge from these subcultures to find the best way to enter a groove. The album is largely instrumental, but Thaione Davis's rapping on the dub-heavy "Tower" gives Radius's relaxed instrumentals an electric energy. —LEOR GALIL

BTS See also Sunday, 7:30 PM, Soldier Field, 1410 S. Museum Campus, \$71-\$200. **ALL**

Seven-member South Korean boy band BTS were already fairly successful when they nonchalantly rapped about having an uncountable amount of trophies in the 2017 Steve Aoki remix of "Mic Drop." Two years later, that boast feels quaint. Their success is no longer measured in mere award-show wins; they're shattering records with nearly every move. Their single "Boy With Luv" racked up 76 million views in 24 hours, and just ten hours later became the video to most quickly reach 100 million. They've also had three albums top the *Billboard* 200 in less than a year—right on the heels of almost instantly selling out their next American stadium tour. Unlike most K-pop acts bent on Western expansion, BTS still perform almost entirely in their native language rather than English, and they've



BTS  COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

kept their high-concept approach to pop rather than simplifying their music for mass consumption. The group's recent *Map of the Soul: Persona* is based on the theories of Carl Jung, but it's also about a band trying to acknowledge and learn from their past. On opener "Intro: Persona" rapper and producer RM revisits a heavy guitar-riff beat from the first track on 2014's *Skool Luv Affair*, but trades the youthful aggression of the group's early material for canny introspection. Lead single "Boy With Luv" nods to a title from *Skool Luv Affair* ("Boy in Love"), but instead of the try-hard negging in that banger, BTS have produced a near-perfect summer love song. But the real show stealer is "Home," a simmering mid-tempo bop full of fuzzed-out bass and hand

claps that shifts effortlessly between high-energy rapping and sweetly sung melodies. It's a song built for arena sing-alongs and long relaxed drives, and it's a perfect showcase for the joyous vocal interplay that has come to define BTS. —ED BLAIR

700 BLISS *Mother Nature and Africans With Mainframes* open. 9:30 PM, Hideout, 1354 W. Wabansia, \$10. 21+

Philadelphia duo 700 Bliss is a perfect example of the kind of supergroup that can emerge from a combination of globally engaged conversation and access to affordable practice spaces. Camae Ayewa, aka Moor Mother, and Zubeyda Muzeyyen, aka DJ Haram, are a part of a smart, active community of artists of color in Philadelphia that nurtures cross-collaboration, and on last year's *Spa 700* (Halcyon Veil/Don Giovanni), they bring beats to the forefront of their noise-informed, rhythm-heavy music and channel the type of spiritual energy that can call up the dead. On "Cosmic Slop," Moor Mother sings "Don't hate, bitch / Up in here trying to code switch" over DJ Haram's North African-infused rhythms, whose high-pitched clicking is reminiscent of the metal Gnawa castanets called *krakebs*. Both musicians come to the table with an arsenal of knowledge: Ayewa also creates art and does ethnographic research with the collective Black Quantum Futurism, and Muzeyyen's zine *Bros Fall Back* initiated a dialogue among Philly's underground venues about the realities of safer spaces. This music is electronic divination for warriors: "Living," a sinister rattle like a snake about to strike in self-defense, is punctuated by the sounds of someone gasping for air and Ayewa's analysis of the African diaspora and the transatlantic slave trade ("Since the start / Color line, bloodline, land mine / Keep us apart"). 700 Bliss use just enough melody in their songs to keep people on the dance floor, and just enough silence to remind us to create space for personal



700 Bliss  MELANIE MARSMAN

MUSIC

reflection. This show also includes sharp, focused local rap duo Mother Nature, whose recent self-released EP, *Pressure*, features energetic lyricism over radio-ready beats. —**SALEM COLLO-JULIN**

SUNDAY12

BTS See Saturday. 7:30 PM, Soldier Field, 1410 S. Museum Campus, \$71-\$200. 

MONDAY13

WOONGI See Pick of the Week, page 32. Liam Kazar and Blush Scars open. 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, 21+. **FREE** 

TUESDAY14

MULATU ASTATKE 7:30 PM, Garfield Park Conservatory, 300 N. Central Park, sold out. 17+

Vibraphonist Mulatu Astatke has a seamless way of fusing the music of his native Ethiopia with jazz and Latin music (and you can hear a little bit of R&B in that mix too). On paper this esoteric brew might seem like an acquired taste, but in reality it's just one worldly step away from Lonnie Liston Smith, Atlantic-era Les McCann, or any other 70s musician who tweaked jazz to follow popular tastes without watering down their sounds. On Astatke's 1966 debut album, *Afro-Latin Soul*, he blended Ethiopian melodies with Latin jazz so skillfully that an inexperienced listener would never know either genre had been altered, but Astatke was bringing a different spice to the table. He recorded that album and its follow-up, *Afro-Latin Soul Vol. 2*, while living in New York, but though his work at the time reflected the musical culture of his adopted city, he never forgot the sounds of his homeland—and in the early 70s, he brought his hybrid style back to Africa, becoming

one of the founders of the Ethio-jazz movement. Astatke has worked steadily through the decades, so when his music was rediscovered in the 90s by collectors of 70s jazz-funk, he was hardly a docile revival artist. He earned a new audience thanks to late-90s reissues of his work by Paris-based label Buda Musique as part of its famous *Éthiopiennes* series, and in the 2000s he collaborated extensively with UK and U.S. bands such as the Heliocentrics and the Either/Orchestra. On his most recent album, 2013's *Sketches of Ethiopia*, Astatke continues his musical evolution. —**JAMES PORTER**

WEDNESDAY15

CHE APALACHE 8:30 PM, Szold Music & Dance Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, 4545 N. Lincoln. **FREE** 

Argentine string band Che Apalache play “Latin-grass,” which might at first seem like a sterile hybrid, but even a few minutes of listening to this four-piece are enough to demonstrate how beautifully Latin folk and bluegrass sounds can intertwine. Multi-instrumentalist and North Carolina native Joe Troop is a music teacher in Buenos Aires, and in 2018 he explained the group's genesis to *Bluegrass Today*: the Appalachian folk style wasn't popular in his adopted city when he arrived in 2010, but the instruments used to make it were. He taught fiddle, banjo, mandolin, and guitar to many eager students—including one of the group's banjo players, Pau Barjau. Che Apalache are a multinational affair (Barjau is from Mexico), and its members walk the line between traditional and contemporary, with a tendency to subvert expectations. Their topical song “The Wall” became a borderline viral folk hit, and 5 percent of the proceeds from an Indiegogo campaign they've used to fund an album with Béla Fleck producing (which is slated for release this summer) will be donated to Siembra NC, an organization based in Greensboro, North Carolina, that protects Latinx immigrants' rights. —**MONICA KENDRICK** 



Che Apalache  COURTESY HERSHEL FREEMAN AGENCY

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CHICAGO SHOWS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT IN THE WEEKS TO COME



NOTS 📷 JAKE GILES NETTE

NEW

Mario Abney 5/23, 8:30 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn
Lydia Ainsworth 7/8, 9 PM, Sleeping Village
Greg Ashley, Eric Wallgren 5/29, 9 PM, Empty Bottle
Banditos 7/26, 8 PM, Empty Bottle, on sale Wed 5/8, 10 AM
Bastille 10/2, 7:30 PM, Chicago Theatre, on sale Fri 5/10, 11 AM **FREE**
Bedouine 10/5, 9 PM, Schubas, 18+
Bishop's Daredevil Stunt Club, Gal Gun, Mark Watson Band 5/31, 7:30 PM, GMan Tavern
Black Joe Lewis & the Honeybears 9/20, 9 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM
Blood, Nunslaughter, Squash Bowels, Anarchus, Viogression 5/24, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+
Bloxx, Hembree, Warbly Jets 6/23, 7:30 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+
Brent Heyl (DJ set) 5/23, 9 PM, Sleeping Village **FREE**
Molly Burch, Bunny 5/16, 9 PM, Schubas, 18+
Alex Cameron 11/8, 10:30 PM, Thalia Hall, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM, 17+
Lewis Capaldi 10/4, 8 PM, Thalia Hall, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM, 17+
Captain Coopersmith, One More Moon, Doomerang 7/12, 8:30 PM, GMan Tavern
Cayucas 7/9, 8 PM, Schubas, on sale Wed 5/8, 10 AM
Che Apalache 5/19, 7 PM, Avondale Music Hall **FREE**
Cheer-Accident, Bobby Conn, Akosuen 8/17, 9 PM, Martyrs'
Clap Your Hands Say Yeah, Danielle Durack 8/26, 8 PM, Schubas, 18+

Rose Colella Organ Quartet 5/28, 7:30 and 9:30 PM, Winter's Jazz Club
Collection, Brontë Fall 5/31, 8:30 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn
Davila 666, Running 7/25, 9 PM, Sleeping Village, on sale Thu 5/9, 10 AM
Deep Purple 10/18, 8 PM, Rosemont Theater, Rosemont, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM **FREE**
Deerhunter 7/7, 9 PM, Metro, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM, 18+
Dirty Dozen Brass Band 7/9, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Fri 5/10, noon **FREE**
Divino Niño, Bunny, Girl K, Valebol, DJ Paulcherry 6/21, 9 PM, Empty Bottle
Doja Cat, Mystery School 5/24, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM **FREE**
Edward & Graham 6/8, 9 PM, Schubas, 18+
An Evening with the Andersons 6/14, 8:30 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn
Mark Farina, DJ Masahiko Uchikawa aka Loftsoul, First Lady 5/25, 10 PM, Smart Bar **FREE**
Flor, Joan, Lostboycrew 10/1, 6:30 PM, Bottom Lounge, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM **FREE**
Full of Hell, Primitive Man, Genocide Pact, Hate Force, Ledger 5/26, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+
Gauche, Pledge Drive, Primitive Teeth 8/18, 8 PM, Subterranean, 17+
Generationalists 9/20, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM, 18+
Maitre Gims 11/3, 6 PM, Concord Music Hall **FREE**
Graveyard Club 7/16, 9:30 PM, Sleeping Village
Harry & the Potters, Richard Album & the Singles 6/30, 7 PM, Beat Kitchen **FREE**
Gerrit Hatcher Group, "Russ

Greimluber"/Jim Baker Duo 5/23, 9 PM, Elastic **FREE**
Drew Holcomb & the Neighbors 9/19, 8 PM, Thalia Hall, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM **FREE**
Hot Stove Cool Music with Peter Gammons and more 6/7, 8 PM, Metro, on sale Fri 5/10, noon, 18+
Imelda Marcos, Big Syn, Not for You 6/20, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle
Incubus, Wild Belle 10/18, 7:30 PM, Aragon Ballroom, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM **FREE**
Ivy Dye, Edwards, Young Strangers 6/18, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle
Jade Jackson 6/7, 7:30 PM, Schubas, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM **FREE**
Eilen Jewell 8/2, 8:30 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn
Knox Hamilton 6/27, 7:30 PM, Schubas **FREE**
Ray LaMontagne, Kacy & Clayton 10/25, 8 PM; 10/26, 8 PM, Chicago Theatre, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM **FREE**
Logan Square Arts Festival's Battle of the Bands featuring Ode, Perro Feo, Holly, Fauvley 5/26, 8 PM, Sleeping Village **FREE**
Madonna 10/15, 8:30 PM; 10/16, 8:30 PM; 10/17, 8:30 PM; 10/21, 8:30 PM, Chicago Theatre **FREE**
Manila Killa, AO Beats, Kolla 5/17, 8:30 PM, Subterranean, 17+
Mastadon, Calcium, Elevatd 6/28, 8 PM, Concord Music Hall, 18+
John Maus, Purple Pilgrims 7/4, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM
Megon McDonough 7/6, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM **FREE**
Midnight 9/15, 9 PM, Metro, 18+
Parker Millsap 8/14, 8 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn

Miss May I, Word Alive, Thousand Below, Afterlife 7/11, 7 PM, Bottom Lounge, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM, 17+
Mndsgn 8/10, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM, 18+
Monxx, Yookie 5/24, 8:30 PM, Park West, 18+
Mudmen: A Pink Floyd Experience 5/17, 9 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn
Nails, Misery Index, Devourment, Outer Heaven, Hate Force 6/8, 6:30 PM, Metro, 18+
Neo Reunion with DJs Jeff Moyer, Scary Lady Sarah, Bill Saveley, and more 7/20, 8 PM, Metro, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM, 18+
New Duncan Imperials 7/27, 8:30 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn
Niko Is, Calid B & Live Band, Brittney Carter, Pete Sayke 6/1, 9 PM, GMan Tavern
North Coast Music Festival featuring Bassnectar, Major Lazer, and more 8/30, 2:30 PM; 8/31, 2:30 PM, Huntington Bank Pavilion **FREE**
NOTS, Olivia Neutron-John 6/4, 8 PM, Subterranean, 17+
Tim O'Brien Band 9/6, 8 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM
Paper Machete Blowout featuring Bad Meow, Cell Phones, and more 7/14, 5 PM, Sleeping Village
Pelican (DJ set) 6/7, 9 PM, Sleeping Village **FREE**
Pinc Louds (solo set) 6/7, 7 PM, Sleeping Village **FREE**
Pride in the Park Chicago with Iggy Azalea, Steve Aoki, Tamar Braxton, Taylor Dayne, Kathy Sledge, Gia Woods, KC Ortiz 6/29, 1 PM, Butler Field, Grant Park **FREE**
Ritt Momney 7/6, 8 PM, Schubas **FREE**
Spotlights, Vampire 8/11, 8:30 PM, Subterranean, 17+
Stiff Little Fingers, Avengers 10/16, 7:30 PM, Bottom Lounge, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM, 17+
Stone Temple Pilots, Rival Sons 9/25, 7 PM, Aragon Ballroom, 17+
Straight No Chaser 12/14, 3 and 7:30 PM, Chicago Theatre, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM **FREE**
Swearin', Mike Krol 8/15, 6:30 PM, Lincoln Hall **FREE**
Tamino 9/18, 8 PM, Schubas, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM, 18+
Them Coulee Boys 6/5, 8 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn
Paul Thorn, Alice Drinks the Kool Aid 7/26, 8 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn
Tillers 6/20, 8:30 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn
Tommy Wright III, Slim Gue-rilla, Vile Secretion 5/19, 7:30 PM, Subterranean, 17+
Tropical Fuck Storm 9/14, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle

ALL ALL AGES **FREE**

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Twen (DJ set) 6/30, 9 PM, Sleeping Village **FREE**
Two Door Cinema Club 9/21, 7:30 PM, Riviera Theatre, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM **FREE**
Vansire 8/9, 9 PM, Schubas, 18+
ViVii 10/4, 9 PM, Schubas, 18+
Weeks 7/26, 8:30 PM, Schubas, 18+
Caleb Willitz, Gone Valley, Seven Houses 5/28, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle
Yeasayer, Oh Rose 6/18, 9 PM, Metro, 18+
YehMe2's Mom & Dad's Residency 6/15, 10 PM; 7/13, 10 PM; 8/17, 10 PM; 9/21, 10 PM, Sleeping Village, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM
Yo La Tengo 6/24, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 5/10, 10 AM **FREE**

UPDATED

Arty 6/28, 10 PM, Sound-Bar, Makeup date for canceled 3/9 show

UPCOMING

... And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead, Protomartyr 5/16, 7:30 PM, Logan Square Auditorium, 18+
Animals as Leaders, Contortionist, Buksa and Gase 5/16, 8 PM, House of Blues, 17+
Black Bear Combo, Les Vikq, Hodges and Hodges 5/16, 9:30 PM, Hideout
Black Pistol Fire, Emily Wolfe 5/18, 9 PM, Metro, 18+
Bloodyminded, Aseethe, Ikaray, Stander 5/25, 9:30 PM, Sleeping Village
Church of Misery, Mondo Generator, Toke 5/26, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle
Cub Sport 5/20, 7:30 PM, Schubas **FREE**
Dead Sun, Grivo, Moss Jaw, Kodakrome 5/19, 8 PM, Subterranean, 17+
In Motion, Buzz, Peter Maunu & Damon D. Green 5/24, 8:30 PM, Constellation, 18+
Indian, Immortal Bird, Bloodiest 5/18, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle
Jim James 5/23, 7:30 PM, The Vic, 18+
Lucy Kaplansky 5/17, 8 PM, Szold Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music **FREE**
Legions of Metal Fest with Cirith Ungol, Salvacion, and more 5/17-18, Reggie's **FREE**



GOSSIP WOLF

A furry ear to the ground of the local music scene

BLAKE KARLSON says that when he founded the label **Chicago Research** late last year, he'd been thinking about building "a more cohesive platform for the current state of postpunk, electronic, and industrial music. This city is too often overlooked as a musical hub. Great things are happening right now." This wolf couldn't agree more—and those great things have helped Chicago Research leave the gate firing on all cylinders! Karlson describes the label as a "collective, with a solid group of musicians, artists, designers, and writers that all collaborate," and its initial batch of releases includes a vinyl version of the first single from **Death Valley** (aka the chilly synth-wave solo project of Ariel Motto) and the plodding, hooky post-punk of **Bruised**, whose LP **Rotten Codex** includes the neck-snapping "(Beneath A) Heap of Glass." In June, Chicago trio **Product KF** drop the LP edition of their April album, **Songs of the Groves**, which features rigorously scrambled industrial noise, murky bass, and depressive vocals.

It didn't seem possible that **Chicago Afrobeat Project's** stomping 2017 album, *What Goes Up*, could get any funkier, but then Latinx DJ crew **Future Rootz** dropped the killer full-length *What Goes Up Remixed* late last month. Gossip Wolf has a feeling that these cuts—remixed by the likes of **Ron Trent, Maga Bo, DJ Sound Culture**, and **Jose Marquez**—are heating up dance floors already.

Alona's Dream does it again! The Chicago punk label has teamed up with its venerable Bay Area counterpart **Alternative Tentacles** to reissue the first two seven-inch EPs from local hardcore pioneers **Articles of Faith**: 1982's *What We Want Is Free* and 1983's *Wait*. Both are limited to 666 copies, so get 'em before the record flippers do. Alona's Dream unveiled these beauts at the recent CHIRP Record Fair, along with a 12-inch EP by locals the **Pornography Glows** (aka the Porno Glows), the debut of Alona's imprint **Violent Pest**. —J.R. NELSON AND LEOR GALIL

Got a tip? Tweet @Gossip_Wolf or e-mail gossipwolf@chicagoreader.com.

2019

UPCOMING SHOWS



- 5.10 Parachute w/ Billy Raffoul
5.11 Grits & Biscuits **LOW TICKET WARNING**
5.12 Falling in Reverse w/ Ice Nine Kills, From Ashes To New & New Year's Day Presented by **cricket wireless**
5.15 BB Mak
5.16 Animals As Leaders w/ The Contortionist & Buke and Gase
5.17 Gasolina Party
5.21 95 WILL Rock and Q Rock 100.7 Presents **I Prevail** w/ Issues & Justin Stone
5.22 Avatar w/ Devin Townsend, Dance With The Dead & '68
5.23 Johnny Cash Tribute: Cash Unchained
5.24 Marianas Trench w/ Scott Helman & DJ George Thoms **LOW TICKET WARNING**
5.26 IML - The Victory Party 5.27 IML - The Black & Blue Ball
5.30 The Damned & X w/ The Detroit Cobras
6.6 NAV w/ Killly **LOW TICKET WARNING**
6.7 The Prince Experience
6.8 Josh Garrels w/ the Gray Havens
6.12 Ones To Watch Presents **ARIZONA** w/ MORGXN **LOW TICKET WARNING**

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TWIN SHADOW DJ SET @ EAST ROOM 5/30
THE DREAM SYNDICATE @ THE HIDEOUT 5/31
OZOMATLI @ SCHUBAS 6/28

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- 5.11 THE SUGARHILL GANG
5.12-13 THE NILS LOFGREN BAND
5.20 JOANNE SHAW TAYLOR
5.24 RAHSAAN PATTERSON
5.28 IAN MAK SIN & ZARIA
SONGS OF THE VAGABOND CELLO

- 5.30 ELVIN BISHOP'S BIG FUN TRIO
5.31 MASON JENNINGS WITH SPECIAL GUEST RHYAN SINCLAIR
6.2 MORGAN JAMES
6.3 AL STEWART
FULL BAND GREATEST HITS SHOW
6.6 CORKY SIEGEL'S CHAMBER BLUES, LYNNE JORDAN & TORONZO CANNON

UPCOMING SHOWS

- 5.10 GRIFFIN HOUSE
5.10 BURLESQUE NIGHT OUT 10:30 PM SHOW
5.16 HOWIE DAY
5.17 SARA EVANS & THE BARKER FAMILY BAND - BLOODLINE TOUR
5.25 BIG BAD VOODOO DADDY
5.26 DEACON BLUES TRIBUTE TO STEELY DAN
5.29 BAD ON PAPER PODCAST LIVE SHOW
6.5 SONGS & STORIES WITH ART ALEXAKIS OF EVERCLEAR, CHRIS COLLINGWOOD OF FOUNTAINS OF WAYNE, MAX COLLINS OF EVE 6, JOHN WOZNAK OF MARCY PLAYGROUND
6.7 RAHEEM DEVAUGHN
6.9 CARRIE NEWCOMER
6.10 CHI-TOWN SINGS - BRITNEY VS. CHRISTINA
6.11 SIRIUS XM THE COFFEEHOUSE TOUR PRESENTS MATT COSTA, JD & THE STRAIGHT SHOT, MATT HARTKE
6.12 THE GREAT LOVE DEBATE
6.13 LINDSAY LOU
6.14 JON B.

MAY 14

AN EVENING OF MUSIC AND FOOD WITH **LIZZ WRIGHT**

MAY 15

DAVID BROMBERG QUINTET

MAY 19

JOAN OSBORNE
SINGS THE SONGS OF BOB DYLAN

MAY 22 + 23

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Groupon, Inc. is seeking a SoX Manager, International in Chicago, IL w/ the following responsibilities: manage Internal Audit of Business Processes & Sarbanes-Oxley (SOx) testing & reporting for Groupon North America location. Apply on-line at https://jobs.groupon.com/jobs/R20482.

INTL FCStone Inc. seeks a Forex Trader (Job Code 528505) in Chicago, IL to execute foreign exchange cash, option, and swap trades into the interbank market using trade execution systems for clients, banks, and counterparties and to coordinate the integration of over-the-counter FX broker communication networks, trade execution systems, and back office systems. 10% international travel required. Mail resume referencing Job Code 528505 to Rosemary Carlson, INTL FCStone Inc., 1251 NW Briarcliff Parkway, Suite 800, Kansas City, MO 64116. EOE.

Sr. Associate (Chicago, IL), Source investmt. opportunities; Conduct financial and business due diligence on investmt. opportunities. Conduct on-site due diligence with mgmt teams of target co.; Perform financial modeling for acq's inc. forecasting and capital structure design. Job req's MBA or rtd w/2 yrs of private equity exp. Job reqs 10-20% travel to company sites. Mail cvr ltr & resume to N. Idehen,

The Vistria Group LP, 300 E Randolph St, Ste. 4030, Chicago, IL 60601.

Mars, Inc. seeks a Senior Talent Specialist in Chicago, IL to partner w/ the segment leadership to ensure global talent mgmt initiatives & proj's are deployed & communicated to stakeholders. Job req Bach deg or equiv in HR, Bus Admin, Org Psych, or rel field & 3 yrs of talent mgmt exp. To Apply: Mail resume to Barbara Mercurio at 100 International Dr, Mt. Olive, NJ 07828.

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PERSONALS

My name is Renee Ann Cryer, and I am an attractive woman looking for a serious relationship that could possibly lead to marriage with a mature man between the ages of 48 and 85. Call or text me at +1 661 429 2033, or write me at 9000 Vanalden Ave, Unit 199, Northridge, CA 91324 for a possible good time.

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct or transaction of Business in the State," as amended, that a certification was registered by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook County, Registration Number: Y19001056 on April 9, 2019 Under the Assumed Business Name of APPLICATION MENTOR with the business located at: 5007 SOUTH KEDVALE AVE, CHICAGO, IL 60632 The true and real full name(s) and residence address of the owner(s)/partner(s) is: Owner/ Partner Full Name Complete Address MICHAEL R NOWAK 5007 SOUTH KEDVALE AVE CHICAGO, IL 60632, USA (5/9)

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct or transaction of Business in the State," as amended, that a certification was registered by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook

County, Registration Number: Y19000782 on March 8, 2019 Under the Assumed Business Name of SKY ENTERTAINMENT with the business located at: 4108 N. KENMORE #1S, CHICAGO, IL 60613 The true and real full name(s) and residence address of the owner(s)/partner(s) is: NOAH HELFAND 4108 N. KENMORE #1S CHICAGO, IL 60613, USA (5/16)

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct or transaction of Business in the State," as amended, that a certification was registered by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook County, Registration Number: Y19001101 on April 15, 2019 Under the Assumed Business Name of STR8GARBAGE with the business located at: 2625 W CORTLAND, CHICAGO, IL 60647. The true and real full name(s) and residence address of the owner(s)/partner(s) is: ALEXANDRA RODRIGUEZ 1634 W GREEN-LEAF CHICAGO, IL 60626, USA LANCE ALLEN 2625 W CORTLAND CHICAGO, IL 60647, USA (5/16)

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct or transaction of Business in the State," as amended, that a certification was registered by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook County, Registration Number: Y19001165 on April 25, 2019 Under the Assumed Business Name of LOPEZ WINDOWS with the business located at: 2310 W. ARTHUR AVE, CHICAGO, IL 60645 The true and real full name(s) and residence address of the owner(s)/partner(s) is: MARIO LOPEZ CABRERA 2310 W. ARTHUR AVE CHICAGO, IL 60645, USA (5/16)

THE MOORISH DIVINE AND NATIONAL MOVEMENT OF THE WORLD
LEGAL NOTICE! NAME DECLARATION, CORRECTION PROCLAMATION AND PUBLICATION I, Zakarrhea' Lisa Newbern Mazzarri Bey, being duly Affirmed, standing squarely, Declare, and Proclaim, upon Divine Law; Nature's Law, Universal Law, Moorish Birthrights; International Law; and Constitutional Law; Declare and say: I, being previously identified by the United States Society of North America - U.S.A. under the colorable, Ward-ship name, Lisa Newbern Mazzarri, do hereby refute the Fraud; make Public and Publish my Corrected National Name; Declare and Affirm my true, "Proper Person Status"; and reclaim my Rightful Social and Cultural Life of the State, in

accord with my Moorish Nation of Northwest Amexem / North America - acknowledging my Birthrights; Having Lawfully and Legally Obtained and Proclaimed my Moorish Nationality and Birthright 'Name and Title'; in harmony with, in association with, and in Accord with Divine Law, the Customs; and the Laws, Rules, and Usages of The Moorish Divine and National Movement; being Aboriginal and Indigenous, and bound to the North American Continent by Heritage, by Primogeniture; by Birthright; by Natural Birth; by Freehold; and by Inheritance. Declared for the Public Record, I am returning the European cognomen and fictitious misnomer back to the Colonial possessors of its pedigree. I am now Rightfully Declaring, Publishing, and Proclaiming my own Free National Name; Affirming my Actual, Rightful, and Civil 'In Full Life' Status; Conjoined to my Moorish American Consanguine Pedigree and National Honor. Let it be Declared, Known, Published, and Resolved that I Am: Zakarrhea' Lisa Newbern Mazzarri Bey, 'In Propria Persona Sui Juris' (being in my own proper person), by birthright; an Inheritance WITHOUT THE FOREIGN, IMPOSED COLOR-OF-LAW, OR ASSUMED DUE PROCESS of the United States Society; pursuant to, but not limited to:

1. FREE MOORISH-AMERICAN ZODIAC CONSTITUTION: (Zodiac Constitution and Birthrights of the Moorish Americans) being Ali, Bey, El, Dey and Ai), Article two (2), Paragraph two (2).
2. UNITED STATES REPUBLIC: DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE: Moorish American Credentials: AA 222141- TRUTH A-1
3. UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT: SUPREME LAW - Acts of State
4. UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION: Article III (3), Section two (2), Amendment V (5) (Liberty clause) and Amendment IX (9) (Reservation of the Rights of the People).
5. RESOLUTION NUMBER SEVENTY-FIVE (75): Dated April 17, 1933 A.D. (MOORISH-AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA AND THE USE OF THEIR NAMES).
6. UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS - UNITED NATIONS - HUMAN RIGHTS [Article Fifteen (15)].
7. RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES - UNITED NATIONS: GENERAL ASSEMBLY - Part 1, Article 4. 8. I attest to Autochthonous AmErigan Moor the aboriginal and Indigenous Natural People and True Heirs of the Land-AI Moroc (America), Affirming Primogeniture, hereditary, birthright, and

Freehold Status Northwest Amexem/Northwest Africa/ North America Wherefore, I, Zakarrhea' Lisa Newbern Mazzarri Bey, being 'Part and Parcel' named herein, and by Birthright, Primogeniture, and Inheritance, make a Lawful and Legal Entry of Affidavit and Public Notification of Nationality Proclamation; Name Correction Claim; Declaration, Affirmation, and Application; Herewith Published for the Public Record. I Am alacas Ley A Free and Sovereign Moorish American National, In Propria Persona Sui Juris Northwest Amexem / Northwest Africa/North America All Rights Reserved Witness: A Free and Sovereign Moorish American National, In Propria Persona Sui Juris Northwest Amexem / Northwest Africa/North America All Rights Reserved LN/NCT No. 0001H (5/16)

Notice is hereby given, Pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct of transaction of Business and in the State," as amended, that a certification was registered by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook County, Registration Number Y19001232 on May 1,2019. Under the Assume Business Name of Fye Girl Sunnies with the business located at: 11544 S Aberdeen street, Chicago IL, 60643. The true and real full name(s) and the residence address of the owner(s)/partner(s) is: Kashara Thigpen 11544 S Aberdeen Street Chicago IL,60643. (5/23)



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